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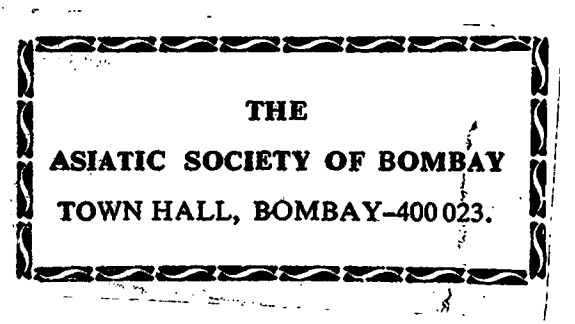

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HISTORY OF EUROPE

DURING THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

1789—1815.

"BELLUM maxi[illegible] omnium memorabile quæ unquam gesta sint me scripturum; quod Hannibale duce Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullæ inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit: et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas primo Punico conserebant bello; odiis etiam prope majoribus certarunt quam viribus; et adeo varia belli fortuna, anceps que Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint qui vicerunt."—LIV. *lib.* 21.

HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.E.,

ADVOCATE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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THE death of Louis completed the destruction of the French monarchy. The Revolution had now run the first stage of such convulsions. Springing from philanthropic principles, cherished by patriotic feel-

CHAP. IX. 1793.

ing, supported by aristocratic liberality, indulged with royal favour, it had successively ruined all the classes who supported its fortunes. The clergy were the first to join its standard, and they were the first to be destroyed; the nobles then yielded to its fortunes, and they were the next to suffer; the King had proved himself the liberal benefactor of his subjects, and conceded all the demands of the revolutionists, and, in return, he was led out to the scaffold. It remained to be seen what was the fate of the victors in the strife; whether such crimes were to go unpunished; and whether the laws of Nature promised the same impunity to wickedness which they had obtained from human tribunals.

"Quid in rebus civilibus," says Bacon, "maxime prodest? Audacia. Quid secundum? Audacia. Quid tertium? Audacia. In promptu ratio est; inest enim naturæ humanæ, plerumque plus stulti quam sapientis, unde et facultates eæ, quibus capitur pars illa in animis mortalium stulta, sunt omnium potentissimæ. Attamen utcunque ignorantiæ et sordidi ingenii proles est Audacia, nihilominus fascinat et captivos ducit eos qui vel judicio infirmiores sunt vel animo timidiores; tales autem sunt hominum pars maxima." "Le canon que vous entendez," said Danton at the bar of the Assembly, "n'est pas le canon d'alarm; c'est le pas de charge sur nos ennemis. Pour les vaincre, pour les atterrer, que faut-il? De l'audace! encore de l'audace! toujours de l'audace!" It is not a little remarkable, that philosophical sagacity should have inspired to the sage of the sixteenth, not only the idea, but the very words, which a practical acquaintance with the storms of the Revolution suggested to the terrible demagogue of the nineteenth century.[1]

[1] Bacon, x. 32. Mig. i. 204. Th. iii. 272.

Never was the truth of these memorable words

more strongly demonstrated than in France during the progress of the Revolution. Rank, influence, talent, patriotism, abandoned the field of combat, or sunk in the struggle; daring ambition, reckless audacity, vanquished every opponent. The Girondists maintained that the force of reason, and of the people, was the same thing; and flattered themselves, that by their eloquence, they could curb the Revolution when its excesses became dangerous; they lived to experience their utter inability to contend with popular violence, and sunk under the fury of the tempest they had created. CHAP. IX. 1793.

The maxim, "Vox populi vox Dei," is true only of the calm result of human reflection, when the period of agitation is passed, and reason has resumed its sway: so predominant is passion in moments of excitation, that it would be nearer the truth then to say, that the voice of the people is that of the demons who direct them. A horse, maddened by terror, does not rush more certainly on its own destruction, than the populace, when excited by revolutionary ambition. *It is this law of Nature which* provides its slow but certain punishment. To scourge each successive faction which attains the head of affairs, another more hardy than itself arises, until the punishment has reached all the guilty classes, and the nation, in sackcloth and ashes, has expiated its offences.

General Consternation at the Death of Louis.

The death of the King roused numbers, when too late, to the dangers of popular rule. Scarcely had his head fallen from the scaffold, when the public grief became visible: the brigands who were hired to raise cries of triumph, failed in rousing a voice among the spectators. The name of Santerre was universally execrated: "The King was about to appeal to us," said the people, "and we would have

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delivered him." Many dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood of the victim; his hair was religiously gathered and placed with the relics of saints, by the few who retained religious sentiments. The National Guards, silent and depressed, returned to their homes; throwing aside their arms, they gave vent, in the bosom of their families, to feelings which they did not venture to display in public. "Alas! if I had been sure of my comrades!" was the general expression; fatal effect of civil dissension, to paralyze the good from mutual distrust, and elevate the wicked from conscious audacity.[1]

[1] Lac. x. 256. Th. iv. 2.

The execution was over at half-past ten; but the shops continued shut, and the streets deserted, during the whole day. Paris resembled a city desolated by an earthquake. Groups of assassins alone were to be seen, singing revolutionary songs, the same as those which preceded the massacre of September. Their voices, re-echoed by the silent walls, reached the prison of the Temple, and first informed the royal family of the fate of the Sovereign. The Queen, with her orphan son, fell on their knees, and prayed that they might soon join the martyr in the regions of Heaven.[2]

[2] Lac. x. 257.

It irrecoverably ruined the Girondists.

The death of the King not only rendered the parties irreconcilable, but weakened the influence of the Girondists with the people. The Jacobins incessantly taunted them with having endeavoured to save the tyrant; the generous design could not be denied, and constituted an unpardonable offence in the eyes of the democratical party. They accused them of being enemies of the people, because they deprecated their excesses; accomplices of the tyrant, because they strove to save his life; traitors to the Republic, because they recommended moderation towards its opponents. Lest the absurdity of these reproaches should become mani-

fest by the return of reason to the public mind, they adopted every means of continuing the popular agitation. To strike terror into the enemies of the Revolution; to keep awake the revolutionary fervour, by the exhibition of danger, and the fury of insurrections; to represent the safety of the Republic as solely dependent on their exertions; to electrify the departments by the aid of affiliated societies; such was the system which they incessantly pursued, till all their enemies were destroyed.[1] CHAP. IX. 1793.

[1] Mignet. i. 242. Th. iv. 2, 3.

A temporary union of the contending parties took place, in consequence of the consternation produced by the death of one of the deputies, Lepelletier St Fargeau, who was murdered for voting against the life of the King, by an old member of the Garde du Corps, named Paris. The condition of the truce was the dismissal of the upright and intrepid Roland from the Ministry of the Interior. He was succeeded by Garat, a man of a benevolent disposition, but no firmness of character, and totally disqualified for the perilous times in which his official duties commenced. *By the retirement of Roland, the Girondists lost the only firm support of their party.*[2] Retirement of Roland.

[2] Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 50. Mignet. i. 243, 244. Toul. iii. 235. Th. iv. 3.

The Jacobins, to the last moment, were doubtful of the success of their attack upon the King. The magnitude of the attempt, the enormity of the crime, startled even their sanguinary minds; and their exultation was proportionally great at their unlooked for success. The Girondists, on the other hand, grieved for the illustrious victim, and, alarmed at the appalling success of their adversaries, perceived in the martyrdom of Louis the prelude to long and bloody feuds, and the first step in the inexorable system which so soon followed. They had abandoned Louis to his fate, to show that they were not Royalists; but the humiliating weak-

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ness deceived no one in the Republic. All were aware that they did so from necessity, not inclination; that fear had mastered their resolution; and that the appeal to the people was an attempt to devolve upon others a danger which they had not the vigour to face themselves. They lost in this way the confidence of every party; of the Royalists, because they had been the original authors of the revolt which dethroned the King; of the Jacobins, because they had recoiled from his execution. Roland, completely discouraged, not by personal danger, but the impossibility of stemming the progress of disaster, was too happy at the prospect of escaping from his perilous eminence into the tranquillity of private life.[1]

[1] Th. iv. 2, 3. Buzot, 10—13.

All parties were disappointed in the effect which they had anticipated from the death of the King. The Girondists, whose culpable declamations had roused the spirit which brought him to the block, had imagined that their ascendency over the populace would be regained by their concurrence in this great sacrifice, and that they would prefer their conservative and moderate counsels to the fierce designs of their dreaded rivals, the Jacobins; but they were soon undeceived, and found to their cost that this act of iniquity, like all other misdeeds, rendered their situation worse than it had formerly been. The Orleanists lost by this terrible event the little consideration which they still possessed, and Philippe Egalité, who had flattered himself that, by agreeing to it, he would secure the crown to himself and his descendants, was speedily overwhelmed in the shock of the more energetic and extreme factions who disputed the lead in public affairs. The Jacobins, with more reason, expected that the destruction of the throne would secure to them a long lease of power: and they did not enjoy it for

eighteen months. France, overwhelmed by their tyranny, sought refuge from its horror, not in the vacillating hands of a benevolent monarch, but the stern grasp of a relentless warrior. Such is the march of revolutions: they never recede when their leaders obtain unresisted ascendency, but are precipitated on, like the career of guilt in an individual, from one excess to another, till the extremity of suffering restores the lead to the classes qualified to take it, and expels the deadly poison of democracy from the social system.[1]

[1] Hist de la Conv. ii. 152, 115, 116.

The Girondists exerted themselves to the utmost to prevent Roland from retiring from the ministry of the Interior, but all their efforts were in vain. Even the influence of his beautiful and gifted wife was unable to retain him at his post. He declared, that death would be preferable to the mortification he was daily obliged to endure. His party were in despair at his retirement, because they saw clearly the impossibility of supplying his place: they had become sensible of the ruinous tendency of their measures to their country and themselves, when it was no longer possible to remeasure their steps.[2]

[2] Hist. de la Conv. ii. 153.

External events, of no ordinary importance, occurred at this time, which precipitated the fall of this celebrated party, and accelerated the approach of the Reign of Terror.

War with England.

The first of these was the accession of England to the league of the Allied Sovereigns against the Republic. The execution of the King, as Vergniaud had predicted, at once dissolved the species of neutrality which subsisted between the rival states; Chauvelin, the French ambassador, received orders immediately to leave London, and this was succeeded, in a few days, by a declaration of war by the Convention against

CHAP. IX. 1793. England, Spain, and Holland;—against England, as having already virtually declared war by the dismissal of the French ambassador; against Holland, as in reality influenced by England; against Spain, as already a secret enemy. These declarations were followed by an order for the immediate levy of 300,000 men.[1]

Feb. 1, 1793.

[1] Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 51. Mign. i. 248. Th. iv. 13, 14.

The effect of these measures throughout France was prodigious. "We thank you for having reduced us to the *necessity of conquering*," was the answer of one of the armies to the Convention in reply to the announcement of the death of the King, and the declaration of war. And, in truth, these sentiments were universal in the armies, general among the people. The feeling of national honour, in all ages so powerful among the French, was awakened; the dominant party of the Jacobins at Paris no longer appeared in the light of a relentless faction, contending for power, but as a band of patriots, bravely struggling for national independence; resistance to their mandates seemed nothing short of treason to the commonwealth in its hour of danger. Every species of requisition was cheerfully furnished under the pressure of impending calamity; in the dread of foreign subjugation, the loss of fortune or employment was forgotten; one only path, that of honour, was open to the brave; one only duty, that of submission, remained to the good; and even the blood which streamed from the scaffold, seemed a sacrifice justly due to the offended Genius of patriotism, indignant at the defection of some of its votaries.[2]

Prodigious Effect of this Event.

[2] Toul. iii. 236, 237. Th. iv. 4, 5.

The Royalist, Constitutional, and Moderate, parties, were never again able to separate the cause of France from that of the Jacobins, who then ruled its destinies. The people, ever led by their feelings, and

Its prejudicial Effect on the Royalist and

often incapable of just discrimination, though when not actuated by wicked leaders, in the end generally true to the cause of virtue, constantly associated the adherents of these parties with the enemies of the Republic; the Royalists, because they fought in the ranks of the Allies, and combated the Republic in La Vendée; the Constitutionalists, because they entered into negotiations with the enemies of the state, and sought the aid of foreign armies to restore the balance of domestic faction; the Moderate, because they raised their voices against internal tyranny, and sought to arrest the arm of power in the effusion of human blood. The party which becomes associated in the mind of the people, with indifference to the fate of the country in periods of danger, can never, during the subsistence of that generation, regain its influence; and the opposition to the ruling power during such a crisis, can hardly avoid such an imputation. By a singular coincidence, but from the influence of the same principle, the opposition, both in France and England, at this period, lost their hold of the influential part of the nation, from the same cause; the French Royalists, because they were accused of coalescing with foreign powers against the integrity of France; the English Whigs, because they were suspected of indifference to national glory in the contest with continental ambition.[1]

Constitutional cause.

[1] Lac. iii. 237. Mig. i. 248.

The French leaders were not insensible to the danger arising from the attack of so formidable a coalition; but retreat was become impossible. By the execution of Louis, they had come to a final rupture with all established governments. The revolt of the 10th August, the massacres in the prisons, the death of the King, had excited the most profound indignation among all the aristocratic portion of society

Plan of the Jacobins for resisting the Allies.

CHAP. IX. 1793. throughout Europe, and singularly cooled the ardour of the middling ranks in favour of the Revolution. The Jacobins were no longer despised by the European powers, but feared; and terror prompts more vigorous efforts than contempt. But the republican leaders at Paris did not despair of saving the cause of democracy. The extraordinary movement which agitated France gave them good grounds for hoping that they might succeed in raising the whole male population for its defence, and that thus a much greater body might be brought into the field than the Allies could possibly assemble for their subjugation. The magnitude of the expense was to them a matter of no consequence. The estates of the emigrants afforded a vast and increasing fund, which greatly exceeded the amount of the public debt; while the boundless issue of assignats, at whatever rate of discount they might pass, amply provided for all the present or probable wants of the treasury.[1]

[1] Th. iv. 16, 18.

The difficulty of procuring subsistence, and the total stagnation of commerce, the unavoidable result of revolutionary convulsions, increased to a most alarming degree during the months of February and March 1793. Dread of pillage, repugnance on the part of the cultivators to sell their produce for payment in the depreciated currency, which necessarily resulted from the unlimited issues of assignats, rendered abortive all the efforts of the government to supply the public necessities. At the same time, the price of every article of consumption increased so immensely, as excited the most vehement clamours among the people. The price, not only of bread, but of sugar, coffee, candles, and soap, had more than doubled since the Revolution commenced. Innumerable petitions on this subject succeeded each other at the bar of the

Assembly. The most violent of the Jacobins had a remedy ready; it was to proclaim a maximum for the price of every article, lay a forced tax on the rich, and hang all persons who sold at a higher price than that fixed by law. In vain Thuriot and a few of the more educated of the party, raised their voices against these extreme measures; they were assailed with cries against the *shopkeeper aristocracy*, their voices drowned by hisses from the galleries; and the Mountain itself found that resisting such proceedings would speedily render them as unpopular as the Girondists had already become. The people now declared that the leaders they had selected were as bad as the old nobles. Perhaps the greatest and most ruinous delusion in such convulsions is the common opinion, that, by selecting their rulers from their own body, the labouring classes will find them more inclined to sympathize with their distresses, than if taken from a more elevated class; a natural but pernicious opinion, which all history proves to be fallacious, and which the common proverb, as to the effect of setting a beggar on horseback, shows to be adverse to the common experience of mankind.[1]

CHAP. IX. 1793.

[1] Th. iv. 39, 41. Hist. de la Conv. ii. 164.

At length the extreme difficulty of procuring subsistence, roused the people to a perfect fury. A tumultuous mob surrounded the hall of the Jacobins, and treated that body as they had so often treated the Assembly. The object was to procure a petition from them to the Convention, to procure the imposition of a maximum. The demand was refused;—instantly, cries of, "Down with the forestallers, down with the rich," resounded on all sides; and the Jacobins were threatened as they had threatened the Convention. Marat, the following morning, published a number of his Journal, in which, raising his powerful voice

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against what he called "the monopolists, the merchants of luxury, the supporters of fraud, the ex-nobles;" he added, "In every country where the rights of the people are not a vain title, the pillage of a few shops, at the doors of which they hung their forestalling owners, would put an end to an evil which reduces five millions of men to despair, and daily causes thousands to die of famine. When will the deputies of the people learn to act, without eternally haranguing on evils they know not how to remedy?"[1]

[1] Journal de la Republique, 25th Feb. 1793. Th. iv. 43, 44.

Encouraged by these exhortations, the populace were not slow in taking the redress of their wrongs into their own hands. A mob assembled, and pillaged a number of shops in the streets of La Veille Monnaie, Cinq Diamans, and Lombards. They next insisted that every article of commerce should be sold at half its present price, and large quantities were seized in that manner at a ruinous loss to the owners. Speedily, however, they became tired of paying at all, and the shops were openly pillaged, without any equivalent.[2]

[2] Th. iv. 46.

All the public bodies were filled with consternation at these disorders. The shopkeepers, in particular, whose efforts in favour of the Revolution had been so decided at its commencement, were in despair at the approach of anarchy to their own doors. The Girondists, who were for the most part the representatives of the commercial cities of France, were fully alive to the disastrous effects of a maximum in prices; but when they attempted to enforce their principles, they were universally assailed by the populace, and their efforts in this particular destroyed all the little consideration which still remained to them. Nor were the Jacobins more successful in their exertions in this respect. The suffering was real and universal: no-

thing could make the people see it was owing to the measures of the Revolution. The attempts of the Municipality to restore order, or pass coercive regulations, were drowned in the cries of the multitude, and the hisses of the galleries; every new act of violence which was recounted, was received with shouts of applause. Neither at the Convention, nor the Hotel de Ville, nor the Jacobins, could any remedy be devised for the fury of the people. Robespierre, St Just, Chaumette, were hooted down the moment they attempted to speak. The Royalists contrasted these deplorable scenes with the tranquillity enjoyed under the monarchy. "Behold," said the Girondists, "to what we are fast driving under the system of popular violence."—"It is all," said the Jacobins, "the work of Royalists, Rolandists, Girondists, and partisans of La Fayette, in disguise." Robespierre maintained in the evening, at the Jacobins, the popular doctrine, "that the people could do no wrong," and that the Royalists were the secret instigators of all the disorders.[1]

[1] Th. iv. 47, 48. Hist. de la Conv. ii. 163.

The alarm in Paris soon became extreme: all the public bodies declared their sittings permanent; the générale everywhere called the armed sections to their posts, and the people openly talked of the necessity of a new insurrection to "lop off the gangrened parts of the National Representation." The Girondists, who were the first likely to suffer, assembled, armed, at the house of Valazè, one of their number, where indecision and distraction of opinion paralyzed all their counsels. The Jacobins were hardly less embarrassed than themselves. Though supported by the Municipality, the majority of the sections, or National Guard, and the armed multitude, they did not conceive the public mind yet ripe for a

CHAP. IX. 1793. direct attack on the National Representatives, where the Girondists still held the important offices. They resolved, therefore, to limit their demands to minor points, preparatory to the grand attack which was to overthrow their adversaries.[1]

[1] Th. iv. 50, 55.

Designs of Dumourier.

The other event which consolidated the influence of the Jacobins in the metropolis, was the unsuccessful attempt of Dumourier to restore the Constitutional Throne. This celebrated General, who was warmly attached to the principles of the Girondists, had long been dissatisfied with the sanguinary proceedings, and still more sanguinary declarations of the democratical leaders, and saw no safety for France, but in the re-establishment of the Constitution of 1791. He left the command of his army, and came to Paris, in order to endeavour to save the life of Louis, and when that project failed, returned to Flanders, and entered into negotiations with Holland and Great Britain. His design was to make an irruption into Holland, overturn the Revolutionary authorities in that country; to form a new government in the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, and raise an army of eighty thousand men; to offer the alliance of this state to the French government, on condition of their restoring the Constitution of 1791; and, in case of refusal, to march to Paris with his own forces, and those of the Belgians, and overturn the Convention and the rule of the Jacobins.[2]

[2] Dum. ii. 287. Toul. iii. 256, 260. Mign. i. 249, 250. Roland. i. 217.

Full of this extraordinary project, Dumourier, at the head of fifteen thousand men, threw himself into Holland. He was at first successful, and succeeded in obtaining possession of Breda and Gertruydenberg; but while prosecuting his career, intelligence was received of the rout of the French army besieging Maestricht, and orders were given for the immediate

return of the victorious army to cover the frontiers. So great was the consternation in the Republican troops, that whole battalions disbanded themselves, and some of the fugitives fled as far as Paris, spreading the most exaggerated reports wherever they went. In obedience to his orders, Dumourier returned to Flanders, and fought a general action with Prince Cobourg; but the allies were successful, and the victory of Nerwinde compelled the French to abandon all their conquests in Flanders.[1]

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[1] Lac. ii. 53, 55, 56. Mign. i. 250.

These events, the details of which belong to another chapter, occasioned an immediate rupture between this General and the Jacobins. Shortly after the battle, he wrote a letter to the Convention, in which he drew too faithful a picture of their government, accusing them of all the anarchy and disorders which had prevailed, and declaring them responsible for the safety of their more moderate colleagues. This letter was suppressed by the government; but it was circulated in Paris, and produced the greatest sensation. Danton returned to the capital from the army, and openly denounced the "Traitor, Dumourier," at the club of the Jacobins; his head was loudly called for as a sacrifice to national justice; and the agitation occasioned by the public disasters, was incessantly kept alive by the circulation of the most gloomy reports.[2]

[2] Toul. iii. 293.

Impelled by the imminent danger of his own situation, dissatisfied with the measures of the Convention, who had both thwarted his political wishes, and withered his military laurels; chagrined at the conduct of the government to the Belgians, who had capitulated on the faith of his assurances, and had subsequently been cruelly treated by their conquerors, Dumourier entered into a correspondence with

Mig. i. 251. Th. iv. 112, 113.

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the Allied Generals. In the prosecution of this design, he neither acted with the vigour nor the caution requisite to ensure success; to his officers, he openly spoke of marching to Paris, as he had recently before spoken of marching to Brussels; while the soldiers were left to the seductions of the Jacobins, who found in them the willing instruments of their ambitious designs. Dumourier, as he himself admits, had not the qualities requisite for the leader of a party; but, even if he had possessed the energy of Danton, the firmness of Bouillé, or the ambition of Napoleon, the current of the Revolution was then too strong to be arrested by any single arm. Like La Fayette and Pichegru, he was destined to experience the truth of the saying of Tacitus, "Bellis civilibus plus militibus quam ducibus licere." His power, great while wielding the force of the democracy, crumbled, when applied to coerce its fury; and the leader of fifty thousand men, speedily found himself deserted and proscribed in the midst of the troops whom he had recently commanded with despotic authority.[1]

[1] Tacitus, Hist. ii. 44. Lac. ii. 256, and 56, Toul. iii. 294, 306. Mig. i. 258.

The first intimation which the Convention received of his designs, was from the General himself. Three determined Jacobins, Proly, Pereira, and Dubuisson, had been sent to headquarters to obtain authentic accounts of his intentions: in a long and animated discussion with them, he openly avowed his views, and threatened the Convention with the vengeance of his army. "No peace!" he exclaimed, "can be made for France, if we do not destroy the Convention; as long as I have a sword to wield, I shall strive to overturn its rule, and the sanguinary tribunal which it has recently created. The Republic is a mere chimera; I was only deceived by it for three days; we must save our country, by re-establishing the throne,

and the Constitution of 1791. Ever since the battle of Jemappes, I have never ceased to regret the triumphs obtained in so bad a cause. What signifies it whether the King is named Louis, James, or Philip? If the lives of the prisoners in the Temple are endangered, France will still find a Sovereign, and I will instantly march to Paris to avenge their death."[1] CHAP. IX. 1793.

[1] Mig. i. 256. Lac. ii. 57.

To the imprudence of this premature declaration, Dumourier, with that mixture of warmth and facility which distinguished his character, added the still greater fault of letting the commissioners, thus possessed of his intentions, depart for Paris, where they lost no time in informing the Convention of the danger which threatened them. Instant measures were taken to counteract the designs of so formidable an opponent. Proceeding with the decision and rapidity which, in civil dissensions, is indispensable to success, they summoned him to appear at their bar, and, on his failure to obey, despatched four commissioners, with instructions to bring him before them, or arrest him in the middle of his army. Dumourier received these representatives in the midst of his staff; they read to him the decree of the Assembly, commanding his instant attendance at their bar; he refused to comply, alleging, as an excuse, the important duties with which he was intrusted, and promising to render an account of his proceedings at some future time. The representatives urged, as a reason for his submission, the example of the Roman Generals. "We deceive ourselves," replied he, "in alleging as an apology for our crimes, the virtues of the ancients. The Romans did not murder Tarquin; they established a Republic, governed by wise laws; they had neither a Jacobin club, nor a Revolutionary Tribunal. We live in the days of anarchy; tigers demand my

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head; I will not give it them."—"Citizen General," said Carnier, the leading representative, "will you obey the decree of the Convention, and repair to Paris?"—"Not at present," replied Dumourier.—"I declare you then suspended from your functions, and order the soldiers to arrest your person."—"This is too much," exclaimed the General; and calling in his hussars, he arrested the representatives of the Convention, and delivered them as hostages to the Austrian General.[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 57. Mig. i. 257. Toul. iii. 311, 312. Th. iv. 118, 119.

The die being now cast, Dumourier prepared to follow up his design of establishing a Constitutional monarchy. Public opinion, in his army, was strongly divided; the corps attached to his person, were ready to go all lengths in his support; those of an opposite tendency, regarded him as a traitor; the majority, as in all civil convulsions, were indifferent, and ready to side with the victorious party. But the General wanted the firm hand requisite to guide a revolutionary movement, and the feelings of the most energetic of his soldiers were hostile to his designs. He set out for Condé, with the intention of delivering it to the Austrians, according to agreement, as a pledge of his sincerity; but having encountered a body of troops, adverse to his designs, he was compelled to take to flight, and only escaped by abandoning his horse, which refused to leap a ditch. With heroic courage, he endeavoured, the following day, with an escort of Austrian hussars, to regain his camp; but the sight of the foreign uniforms roused the patriotic feelings of the French soldiers; the artillery first abandoned his cause, and, soon after, their example was followed by the whole infantry. Dumourier, with difficulty, regained the Austrian lines, where fifteen hundred followers only joined his standard. The re-

He resolves to re-establish the Monarchy.

His failure and flight.

mainder of the army collected in an intrenched camp at Famars, where, shortly after, General Dampierre, by authority of the Convention, assumed the command.[1]

[1] Toul. iii. 313, 316. 320. Mig. i. 258. Lac. ii. 61, 62. Th. 120—126.

The failure of this, as of every other unsuccessful conspiracy, added to the strength of the ruling party in the French capital. Terror, often greatest when the danger is past, prepared the people to take the most desperate measures for the public safety; the defection of Dumourier to the Austrians, gave the violent revolutionists the immense advantage of representing their adversaries as, in reality, enemies to the cause of France. During the first fervour of the alarm, the Jacobins denounced their old enemies, the Girondists, as the authors of all the public calamities, and actually fixed the 10th March for a general attack upon the leaders of that party in the bosom of the Convention. The Assembly had declared its sittings permanent, on account of the public dangers; and, on the evening of the 9th, it was determined, at the Club of the Jacobins, and the Cordeliers, on the following day, to close the barriers, to sound the tocsin, and march in two columns with the forces of the Fauxbourgs upon the Convention. At the appointed hour, the leaders of the insurrection repaired to their posts; but the Girondists, informed of their danger, abstained from joining the Assembly at the dangerous period; the Sections and National Guard hesitated to join the insurgents; Bournonville, minister of war, marched against the Fauxbourgs at the head of a faithful battalion of troops from Brest, and a heavy rain cooled the revolutionary ardour of the multitude. Petion, looking at the watery sky, exclaimed, "It will come to nothing; there will be no insurrection to night." The plot failed, and its failure

Contests between the Girondists and Jacobins.

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postponed, for a few weeks, the commencement of the Reign of Terror. By such slender means was it possible, at that period, to arrest the disorders of the Revolution; and on such casual incidents did the most momentous changes depend.[1]

[1] Mig. i. 251. Lac. ii. 62. 65. Th. iv. 76.

Establishment of the Revolutionary Tribunal, 9th March.

Danton and the Jacobins made an immediate use of the agitation produced by these events, to urge the establishment of a REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL, "in order to defend from internal enemies the relations of those who were combating foreign aggression on the frontiers." The Girondists exerted themselves to the utmost to resist this institution, as arbitrary as it threatened to be formidable. But their efforts were in vain; the public mind, violently shaken by the dread of domestic treason, was inaccessible to the apprehension of sanguinary rule. All that they could effect was in the end to introduce juries into the new court, and to moderate, to a certain degree, the violence of its proceedings, until the fatal insurrection which subjected themselves to its terrors.[2]

[2] Mig. i. 248. 249. Th. iv. 66.

At the same time, another decree was passed, which imposed upon all proprietors an extraordinary war-tax; a third, which organized forty-one commissions, of two members each, to go down to the departments, armed with full powers to enforce the recruiting, disarm the refractory, seize all the horses destined for the purposes of luxury: in a word, exert the most despotic authority. These commissioners generally exercised their powers with the utmost rigour; and being armed with irresistible authority, and supported by the whole revolutionary party, laid the foundations of that iron net in which France was enveloped during the Reign of Terror.[3]

[3] Ibid. iv. 66.

The conspirators, astonished at the absence of the Girondists during the critical period, broke out into

the loudest invectives against them for their defection. "They were constantly at their posts," they exclaimed, "when the object was to save Louis Capet; but they hid themselves when the country was at stake. On the following day, all Paris resounded with the failure of the conspiracy; and Vergniaud, taking advantage of the general consternation, denounced in the Convention the Committee of Insurrection which had projected the massacre, and moved that the papers of the Clubs should be seized, and the members of the committee arrested. "We march," he exclaimed, "from crimes to amnesties, and from amnesties to crimes. The great body of citizens are so blinded by their frequent occurrence, that they confound these seditious disturbances with the grand national movement in favour of freedom, regard the violence of brigands as the efforts of energetic minds, and consider robbery itself as indispensable for public safety. You are free, say they; but unless you think like us, we will denounce you as victims to the vengeance of the people; you are free, but unless you bow before the idol which we worship, we will deliver you up to their violence; you are free, but unless you join us in persecuting those whose probity or talents we dread, we will abandon you to their fury. Citizens, there is too much reason to dread *that the Revolution, like Saturn, will successively devour all its progeny, and finally leave only despotism, with all the calamities which it produces.*" These prophetic words produced some impression; but, as usual, the Assembly did nothing adequate to arrest the evils which they anticipated. Some of the conspirators were brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, but their trials led to nothing.[1]

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Abortive conspiracy of the Jacobins.

[1] Mig. i. 252. Th. iv. 78. Lac. ii 64.

The Jacobins were for a moment disconcerted by

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the failure of this conspiracy, but the war in La Vendée, which broke out about this period, and rapidly made the most alarming progress, soon reinvested them with their former ascendency over the populace. The peculiar circumstances of this district, its simple manners, patriarchal habits, remote situation, and resident proprietors, rendered it the natural centre of the Royalist spirit, which the execution of Louis had roused to the highest degree throughout all France. The nobles and clergy not having emigrated from its provinces, were there in sufficient force to counterbalance the influence of the towns, and raise the standard of revolt. The two most powerful passions of the human mind, religious fanaticism and popular ambition, were rapidly brought into collision; a war of extermination was the result, and a million of Frenchmen perished in the strife of the factions contending for their dominion.[1]

War in La Vendée breaks out.

[1] Lac. ii. 68, 64. Mig. i. 252, 253.

Assailed by so many foreign and domestic dangers, the Convention adopted the most energetic measures, and the Jacobins resorted to their usual means to agitate and sway the public mind. The powers of the Revolutionary Tribunal were augmented; instead of proceeding on a decree of the Convention, as the warrant for judging of an accused person, it was empowered to *accuse* and *judge* at the same time. All the Sans Culottes were ordered to be armed with a pike and a fusil, at the expense of the opulent classes; a forced loan was exacted from those persons possessed of any property; and revolutionary taxes levied in every department, according to the pleasure of the Revolutionary Commissioners. The Commune of Paris demanded the imposition of a maximum on the price of provisions, a demand certain of popularity with the lower orders, and the refusal of which in-

Vigorous measures of the Convention.

creased their dissatisfaction with the measures of the Convention.[1] CHAP. IX. 1793.

Meanwhile, the democrats were not slow in taking advantage of the increasing agitation of the public mind to improve the great victory they had recently gained by the establishment of a Revolutionary Tribunal. Agitation, as usual, was resorted to; a repast was provided for the people at the Halle-au-Blè; and the galleries were filled with the partisans of the Jacobins, heated with wine, and prepared to applaud every extravagance of their leaders. Lindèt read the *projet* of a law for the regulation of the new Tribunal; it bore, that it should be composed of nine members, appointed by the Convention, liberated from all legal forms, authorized to convict on any evidence, divided into two permanent divisions, and entitled to prosecute either on the requisition of the Convention, or of their own authority, all those who, either by their opinions misled the people, or by the situations they occupied under the old *régime*, recalled the usurped privileges of despots.[2]

[1] Lac. ii. 65. 66.

[2] Th. iv. 70.

When this appalling *projet* was read, the most violent murmurs broke out on the right, which was speedily drowned in the loud applauses of the galleries and the left. "I would rather die," exclaimed Vergniaud, "than consent to the establishment of a Tribunal worse than the Venetian Inquisition."—"Take your choice," answered Amar, "between such a measure and an insurrection."—"My inclination for Revolutionary power," said Cambon, "is sufficiently known; but if the people may be deceived in their elections, are not we equally likely to be mistaken in the choice we make of the judges? and if so, what insupportable tyrants shall we then have created for ourselves!" The tumult became frightful;

March 10.

CHAP. IX. 1793. the evening approached; the Assembly, worn out with exertion, were yielding to violence; the members of the Plain were beginning to retire, and the Jacobins loudly calling for a decision by open vote, when Féraud exclaimed, "Yes, let us give our votes publicly, in order that we may make known to the world the men who would assassinate innocence under cover of the law." This bold apostrophe recalled the yielding centre to their post; and, contrary to all expectation, it was resolved "that the trials should take place by jury; that the jurors should be chosen from the departments, and that they should be named by the Convention."[1]

[1] Th. iv. 71, 72.

After this unexpected success, the Girondists proposed that the Assembly should adjourn for an hour; but Danton, who was fearful lest the influence of terror and agitation should subside even in that short interval, raised his powerful voice. "I summon," said he, in a voice of thunder, "all good citizens to take their places. We must instantly terminate the formation of these laws destined to strike terror into the internal enemies of the Revolution. They must be arbitrary, because they cannot be precise; because how terrible soever they may be, they are preferable to those popular executions which now, as in September, would be the consequence of any delay in the execution of justice. After having organized this Tribunal, we must organize an energetic executive power, which may be in immediate contact with you, and put at your disposal all your resources in men and money. Let us profit by the errors of our predecessors, and do that which the Legislative Assembly has not ventured to do: there is no medium between ordinary forms and a Revolutionary Tribunal. Let us be terrible to prevent the people from becoming so: let us organize a tribunal, not which shall

do good, that is impossible, but which shall do the least evil that is possible, to the effect that the sword of the law may descend upon all its enemies. To-day, then, let us complete the Revolutionary Tribunal, to-morrow, the executive power, and the day after, the departure of our commissioners for the departments. Calumniate me if you will, but let my memory perish provided the republic is saved."[1] The Assembly, overwhelmed by terror, invested the new tribunal with the despotic powers which were afterwards exercised with such ruinous effect on most of its own members.*

[1] Hist. de la Conv. Lac. ii. 202. iv. 72, 73. Hist. de la Conv. ii. 209, 210.

Dumourier denounced, and Committee of Public Safety created.

No sooner was the arrest of the National Commissioners of the Convention known at Paris, than the Convention declared its sittings permanent, denounced Dumourier as a traitor, fixed a price on his head, banished the Duke of Orleans and all the Bourbons, and created the famous COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY, destined to complete the crimes, and destroy the authors of the Revolution. † Though the Giron-

* The Decree of the Convention was in these terms: "There shall be established at Paris an Extraordinary Criminal Revolutionary Tribunal. It shall take cognizance of every attempt against liberty, equality, the unity or indivisibility of the Republic, the internal or external security of the state, of all conspiracies tending to the re-establishment of Royalty, or hostile to the sovereignty of the people, whether the accused are public functionaries, civil or military, or private individuals. Then members of the jury shall be chosen by the Convention: the judges, the public accuser, the two substitutes, shall be named by it: the Tribunal shall decide on the opinion of the majority of the jury: the decision of the Court shall be without appeal, and the effects of the condemned shall be confiscated to the Republic."—The Girondists laboured hard to introduce the clause allowing the members of the Convention to be tried in that court, with a view to the trial of Marat before it: the same clause was afterwards made the means of conducting almost all of themselves to the scaffold.—See Hist. de la Conv. ii. 209, 210.

† The Decree establishing the Committee of Public Safety was in these terms:—"The Committee shall be composed of twenty-five members: it shall be charged with the preparation of laws, and all measures, exterior and interior, necessary for the safety of the Repub-

CHAP. IX. 1793. dists concurred in these measures as warmly as the Jacobins, yet they were accused of a secret leaning towards the rebellious general, and this, on the alarm following his defection, became a powerful engine in the hands of their adversaries. Robespierre accused by name Brissot, Guadet, Vergniaud, Petion, and Gensonné, in the Convention, while Marat denounced them in the popular societies. As President of the Society of Jacobins, he wrote a circular to the departments, in which he invoked "the thunder of accusations and petitions against the traitors and unworthy delegates, who had strove to save the tyrant by voting for the appeal to the people."[1]

[1] Mig. i. 258, 259. Th. iv. 131, 145.

Fouquier Tinville was the public accuser in the Revolutionary Tribunal; and his name soon became as terrible as that of Robespierre to all France. He was born in Picardy, and exhibited a combination of qualities so extraordinary, that, if it had not been established by undoubted testimony, it would have been deemed fabulous. Sombre, cruel, suspicious, the implacable enemy of merit or virtue of any kind, ever ready to aggravate the sufferings of innocence, he appeared insensible to every sentiment of compassion or equity. Justice in his eyes consisted in condemning; an acquittal was the source of profound vexation: he was never happy unless he had secured the conviction of all the accused. He exhibited in the pursuit of this object an extraordinary degree of ardour: he seemed to consider his personal credit as involved in the decision on their guilt: their firmness and calm demeanour in presence of their judges inspired him with transports of rage. But

lic. The Committee shall call to its meetings all the ministers composing the executive authority, at least twice a week. It shall render an account to the Convention whenever rquired to do so, and inform it weekly of the state of the Republic, and of that of all matters connected with it which should be divulged."—See Hist. de la Conv. ii. 227.

with all this hatred for all that is most esteemed among men, he showed himself equally insensible to the attractions of fortune, or the sweetnesses of domestic life. He required no species of recreation: women, the pleasures of the table, of the theatre, were alike indifferent to him. Sober and sparing in diet, he never indulged in any Bacchanalian excess, excepting when with the Judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal he celebrated what they termed a *feu de file:* that was, a sitting at which all the accused were condemned: he then gave way to intemperance. His power of undergoing fatigue was unbounded: he was seldom to be seen at the clubs or any public meeting: the Revolutional Tribunal was the theatre of all his exertions. The sole recreation which he allowed himself was to behold his victims perish on the scaffold: he confessed that that spectacle had great attractions. He might, during the period of his power, have amassed an immense fortune: he remained to the last poor, and his wife is said to have died of famine. His lodgings were destitute of every comfort: their whole furniture after his death did not sell for twenty pounds. No seduction could influence him: he was literally a bar of iron against all the ordinary desires of men. Nothing roused his mind but the prospect of inflicting death, and then his animation was such that his countenance became radiant and expressive.[1]

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[1] Hist. de la Conv. ii. 215, 217.

The infatuation of the Girondists hourly increased. The city of Paris was daily becoming more menacing, at least in its active and influential masses, and yet they blindly reckoned on their inviolability under the constitution, which they had so manifestly violated in the case of the King. This was the more extraordinary, as Robespierre began now openly to act on that plan, which he never ceased to pursue till all his enemies were destroyed. This design consisted, in

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the first instance, in getting quit of the Girondists by means of the Mountain; and secondly, in destroying by its influence all persons of the ancient regime, who, either by their rank, their fortune, or their virtues, were fitted to give him any umbrage. He required to level all the heads which rose above his own, and among these he had already marked out Philippe Egalité as his first victim, the Queen as the next; and having accomplished these objects, his last object was to decimate the Mountain itself, so that no rival who could give him disquietude should be permitted to exist. At the same time, he persecuted with relentless vigour all the military leaders who had acquired any eminence, being well aware that it was among them that his most formidable rival was likely to arise. Inconceivable as such a plan appears, nothing is more certain than that it existed, and the event will show how very near it was being carried into complete execution.[1]

[1] Hist. de la Conv. ii. 192.

The infatuation of the Girondists was chiefly founded on the immense majority by which they had recently secured the election of Petion as mayor of Paris, in opposition both to Robespierre and Danton. The former had only 23 votes; the latter, 11; while Petion had 14,000. It is not suprising that with this majority they conceived themselves in a situation to brave the populace. The event soon showed on what fallacious grounds their reliance was placed.[2]

[2] Hist. de la Conv. i. 130.

Girondists send Marat to the Revolutionary Tribunal.

The Convention felt the necessity of making an effort to resist the inflammatory proceedings of the Jacobins. By an united effort of the Girondists and neutral party, Marat was sent for trial to the Revolutionary Tribunal, on the charge of having instigated the people to demand the punishment of the National Representatives. This was the first instance of the inviolability of the Convention being broken

through, and, as such, it afforded an unfortunate precedent, which the sanguinary party were not slow in following. Yet the accusation of Marat was in reality no violation of the privileges of the Assembly. He was sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, not for what he said or did in the Convention, but for a circular addressed to the departments, as President of the Jacobin Club; and it was never supposed that the members of the Assembly were privileged to commit treason without its walls.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 339.

The Jacobins lost no time in adopting measures to counteract this vigorous step. The clubs, the multitude, and the centre of insurrection, the Municipality, were put in motion. The whole force of popular agitation was called forth to save, as they expressed it, "that austere profound philosopher, formed by meditation and misfortune, gifted with such profound sagacity, and so great a knowledge of the human heart, who alone penetrated the designs of traitors on their triumphal cars, at the moment when the stupid vulgar were still loading them with applause." Paché, the Mayor of Paris, appeared at the bar of the Assembly, to demand, in the name of five-and-thirty Sections, and of the Commune, the expulsion of the leaders of the Gironde. The young and generous Boyer Fonfrede demanded to be included in the list of the proscribed; an act of devotion which subsequently cost him his life. All the members of the right and centre rose, and insisted upon being joined with their colleagues in the accusation. The petition was rejected, but the designs of its authors were gained; it accustomed the people to the spectacle of the Convention being besieged by popular clamour, and impaired the majesty of the legislature, by exhibiting the impunity with which its members might be assailed.[2]

Th. iv. 150.

Vehement agitation to counteract it.

15th April.

[2] Toul. iii. 339, 340. Mig. i. 259. Th. iv. 150. Lac. ii. 67.

Marat was accompanied to the Revolutionary Tri-

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bunal by the whole leaders of the Jacobin party. He was acquitted, and brought back in triumph to the Assembly. An immense multitude came with him to the gates; the leaders of the mob entered, and exclaimed,—"We bring you back the brave Marat, the tried friend of the people; they will never cease to espouse his cause." A sapper broke off from the multitude, and exclaimed—"Marat was ever the friend of the people; had his head fallen, the head of the sapper would have fallen with it." At these words, he brandished his axe in the air, amidst shouts of applause from the Mountain and the galleries. The mob insisted upon defiling in triumph through the hall; before the President could consult the Assembly on the subject, the unruly body rushed in, bearing down all opposition, and climbing over all the barriers, seated themselves in the vacant places of the deputies, who retired in disgust from such a scene of violence. The Convention beheld in silence the defeat of its measures; the Jacobins redoubled their efforts to improve the victory they had gained. Its approaches were incessantly besieged by an unruly mob, who clamoured for vengeance against the proscribed deputies; the galleries were filled by partisans of the Jacobins, who stifled the arguments of their opponents, and loudly applauded the most violent proposals; the clubs, at night, resounded with demands of vengeance against the traitor faction.[1]

He is acquitted.

[1] Toul. 260. Lac. ii. 66. Mig. i. 260. Th. iv. 151, 152.

The Girondists now saw that there was no time to lose in coercing the attempts of the Jacobins, and of the Municipality. Guadet, in an energetic discourse, declared,—"Citizens, while good men lament in silence the misfortunes of the country, the conspirators are in motion to destroy it. Like Cæsar, they exclaim—'Let others speak, we act.' To meet them, we must act also. The evil lies in the impunity of the

Energetic proposal of Guadet. 10th May.

conspirators of March 10; in the prevailing anarchy; in the misrule of the authorities of Paris, who thirst only for power and gold. There is yet time to save the country, and our own tarnished honour. I propose instantly to annul the authorities of Paris; to replace the Municipality by the Presidents of the Sections; to unite the supplementary members of the Assembly at Bourges; and to announce this resolution to the departments by extraordinary couriers." These decisive measures, if adopted by the Assembly, would have destroyed the power of the Municipality, and the designs of the conspirators; but they would have at once occasioned a civil war, and, by dividing the centre of action, augmented the danger of foreign subjugation. The majority were influenced by these considerations; the separation of the Assembly into two divisions, one at Paris, one at Bourges, seemed the immediate forerunner of conflicting governments. Barrere supported these opinions. "It is by union and firmness," he said, "that you must dissipate the storms which assail you; division will accelerate your ruin; do you imagine, that, if the conspirators dissolve the Convention in the centre of its power, they will have any difficulty in disposing of its remnant, assembled at Bourges? I propose that we should nominate a commission of twelve persons, to watch over the designs of the Commune, to examine into the recent disorders, and arrest the persons of their authors; but never, by acceding to the measure of Guadet, declare ourselves unequal to combat its influence." This proposal was adopted by the Convention, and the opportunity of destroying the Municipality lost for ever.[1]

It is not adopted, but a Commission of Twelve appointed. May 15.

The Commission of Twelve, however, commenced their proceedings with vigorous measures. A conspiracy against the majority of the Convention had for

[1] Toul. iii. 261. Mig. i. 260, 261. Th. iv. 198.

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some time been openly organized in Paris; the Club of the Cordeliers was the centre of the movement, and an insurrectionary committee sat night and day. The public fervour soon demanded more than the mere proscription of the thirty deputies; three hundred were required. Varlet had openly proposed a plan for the insurrection, which was discussed amidst furious cries at the Cordeliers, and the execution of the design fixed for the 22d May. It was agreed that the armed multitude should proceed to the hall of the Convention, with the Rights of Man veiled by crape, to seize and expel all the members who had belonged to the Constituent, or Legislative Assemblies, turn out the ministry, and destroy all who bore the name of Bourbon.[1]

General insurrection against the Girondists and Convention, 21st May.

[1] Th. iv. 206.

The Committee speedily obtained evidence of this conspiracy; and arrested one of its leaders, Hebert, the author of an obscene and revolting revolutionary journal, entitled the "Pere Duchesne," which had acquired immense circulation among the followers of the Municipality. That turbulent body instantly put itself in a state of insurrection, declared its sittings permanent, and invited the people to raise the standard of revolt. Some of the most violent Sections followed their example; those who held out for the Assembly, were besieged by clamorous bands of armed men. The Club of the Jacobins, of the Cordeliers, of the Revolutionary Sections, sat day and night; the agitation of Paris rose to the highest pitch.[2]

[2] Lac. ii. 67, 68. Mig. i. 261, 262. Th. iv. 210, 211.

On the 25th May, a furious multitude assembled round the hall of the Convention, and a deputation appeared at the bar, demanding, in the most threatening terms, the suppression of the Commission of Twelve, and immediate liberation of Hebert, the imprisoned member of the Magistracy,—some even went the length of insisting that the Commission should

25th May.

immediately be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Isnard, President of the Assembly, a courageous and eloquent Girondist, replied,—"Listen to my words: if ever the Convention is exposed to danger; if another of those insurrections, which have recurred so frequently since the 10th March, breaks out, and the Convention is outraged by an armed faction, France will rise as one man to avenge our cause; Paris will be destroyed, and soon the stranger will inquire on which bank of the Seine Paris stood."[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 68, 69.

This indignant reply produced, at the moment, a great impression; but crowds of subsequent petitioners, with Danton at their head, quickly appeared, and restored confidence to the conspirators. Upon the continued refusal of Isnard to liberate Hebert, crowds from the benches of the Mountain rose to drag him from his seat; the Girondists assembled to defend him. In the midst of the tumult, Danton, in a voice of thunder, exclaimed—"So much impudence is beyond endurance; we will resist you; let there be no longer any truce between the Mountain and the base men who wished to save the tyrant."[2]

Mig. i. 262. Th. iv. 213.

[2] Mig. i. 262. Lac. ii. 69.

The deputies from the Municipality retired on that occasion, without having obtained what they desired; but they were resolved instantly to proceed to insurrection. All the remainder of the 25th, and the whole of the 26th, was spent in agitation, and exciting the people by the most inflammatory harangues. Such was the success of their efforts, that, by the morning of the 27th, eight-and-twenty Sections were assembled to petition for the liberation of Hebert. The commission of twelve could only rely on the support of the armed force of three Sections; but they hastened, on the first summons, to the support of the Convention, and ranged themselves, with their arms

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and artillery, round the hall. But an immense multitude crowded round their ranks, cries of—"Death to the Girondists!" resounded on all sides, and the hearts even of the most resolute began to quail under the fury and menacing conduct of the people.[1]

[1] Th. 214, 215.

The Girondists with difficulty maintained their ground against the Jacobins within the Assembly, and the furious multitude who besieged its walls, when Garat, the Minister of the Interior, entered and deprived them of their last resource, the necessity of unbending firmness. When called upon to report upon the state of Paris, he declared "that he saw no appearance of a conspiracy; that he had met with nothing but respect from the crowd which surrounded the Assembly; and that the only perfidious design which he believed existed, was to divide, by the dread of chimerical dangers, two parties, equally desirous of promoting the public welfare." In making this report, Garat had been deceived by Paché, Mayor of Paris, a hypocritical Jacobin, of the most dangerous character. France had reason then to lament the retirement of the firm and sagacious Roland from his important office.[2]

Desperate Contest in the Assembly. Report of Garat declaring Paris tranquil.

[2] Lac. ii. 69. Mig. i. 263. Th. ii. 217, 218.

Struck dumb by this extraordinary and unexpected report, which appeared accountable only on the defection of the Minister of the Interior, the Girondists, for the most part, withdrew from the Assembly, and the courageous Isnard was replaced in the president's chair, by Herault de Sechelles. Yielding to the clamour which besieged the Legislature, he declared "the force of reason and of the people are the same thing; you demand a magistrate in detention, the representatives of the people restore him to you." The motion was then put, that the Commission of Twelve should be abolished, and Hebert set at liberty; it was

carried at midnight, amidst shouts of triumph from the mob, who constituted the majority, by climbing over the rails and voting on the benches of the Mountain, with the Jacobins.[1] CHAP. IX. 1793.

[1] Lac. ii. 69. Mig. i. 263. Th. iv. 220, 221.

Ashamed of the consequences of their untimely desertion of the Convention, the Girondists, on the following day, assembled in force, and reversed the decree, extorted by force, on the preceding evening. Lanjuinais in an especial manner distinguished himself in this debate, which was tumultuous and menacing to the very last degree. "Above fifty thousand citizens," said he, "have already been imprisoned in the departments, by orders of your commissioners; more arbitrary arrests have taken place than under the old *régime* in a whole century; and you have excited all this tumult, because we have put into custody two or three individuals who openly proclaimed murder and pillage. Your commissaries are proconsuls, who act far from you, and without your knowledge, and your whole jealousy is centred on the Commission placed under your eyes, and subject to your immediate control. On Sunday last, it was proposed at the Jacobins to have a general massacre in Paris; to-night the same proposal is to be brought forward at the Cordeliers, and the Electoral Club of the Evêché; the proofs of the conspiracy are ready; we offer them to you, and yet you hesitate; you protect only assassins covered with blood." At these words the Mountain drowned the voice of the speaker, and Legendre threatened to throw him headlong from the Tribune. But the intrepid Lanjuinais kept his ground; and the decree of the preceding day was reversed by a majority of fifty-one. The Jacobins instantly broke out into the most furious exclamation. "Yesterday," said Danton, "you did an act of justice; beware of depart- 26th May.

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ing from its example; if you persist in asserting the powers you have usurped; if arbitrary imprisonments continue; if the public magistrates are not restored to their functions, after having shown that we surpass our enemies in moderation and wisdom, we will show that we surpass them in audacity and revolutionary vigour."—"You have violated the 'Rights of Man,'" said Collot d'Herbois; "tremble! we are about to follow your example; they shall not serve as a shield to tyrants. Throw a veil over the statue of Liberty, so impudently placed in the midst of your hall; we will not incur the guilt of any longer restraining the indignation of the people."[1]

[1] Th. iv. 223, 224.

Renewal of the Insurrection on May 31st.

The agitation, which had begun to subside, after the victory of the preceding evening, was renewed with redoubled violence on the reversal of the decree. Robespierre, Marat, Danton, Chaumette, and Paché, immediately commenced the organization of a new revolt; the 29th was employed for arranging the forces. On the 30th, the members of the Electoral Body, the Commissioners of the Clubs, the Deputies of the Sections, declared themselves in insurrection; Henriott received the command of the armed force; and the Sans Culottes were promised forty sous a-day while under arms. These arrangements being made, the tocsin sounded, the générale beat at day-break on the morning of the 31st, and the forces of the Faux-bourgs marched to the Tuileries, where the Convention was assembled.[2]

[2] Mig. i. 265. Lac. ii. 70, 71. Th. iv. 225. 233.

On this occasion the first symptom appeared of a division between Danton and Robespierre, and the more furious Jacobins: the former was desirous of procuring the abolition of the Committee of Twelve, but not of an outrage on the legislature; the latter wished to overturn the Convention by the force of

the Municipality. But he was already passed in the career of revolution by more desperate insurrectionists: a general revolt had been resolved on by the Central Committee of Insurrection; a moral insurrection, as they termed it, unaccompanied by pillage or violence, but with such an appalling display of physical force as should render resistance impossible. Forty-eight Sections met, and publicly announced their determination to raise the standard of revolt; and by daybreak, on the 31st, all Paris was in arms.[1]

[1] Th. iv. 236, 237.

The National Guard, and the insurgent forces, were at first timid, and uncertain whose orders to obey, and for what object they were called out. The terrible cannoneers, the janizaries of the Revolution, took the lead. The cry "Vive la Montagne! Perissent les Girondins!" broke from their ranks, and revealed the secret of the day; they fixed the wavering by the assumption of the lead. It was soon discovered that the object was to present a petition, supported by an armed force, to the Assembly, demanding the proscription of the twenty-two leaders of the Gironde, the suppression of the Committee of Twelve, and the imposition of a maximum on the price of bread.[2]

[2] Lac. ii. 71. Mig. i. 265. Th. iv. 238, 239.

Vast Forces organized in the Fauxbourgs.

In the Fauxbourg St Antoine, the old centre of insurrections, the revolt assumed a more disorderly character. Pillage, immediate rapine and disorder, could alone rouse its immense population. The Commune excited their cupidity, by proposing to march to the Palais Royal, whose shopkeepers were the richest in Paris. "Arm yourselves," exclaimed the agents of the Municipality, "the Counter Revolution is at hand; at the Palais Royal they are this moment crying 'Vive le Roi,' and trampling under foot the national colours; all its inhabitants are accomplices in the plot; march

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to the Palais Royal, and thence to the Convention." But the inhabitants of that district were prepared for their defence; the gates of the palace were shut, and artillery placed in the avenues which led to them. When the immense forest of pikes began to debouche from the side of the Fauxbourgs, the cannoneers stood with lighted matches to their pieces; and the wave of insurrection rolled aside to the more defenceless quarter of the Legislature.[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 72. Th. iv. 247.

The Convention had early assembled at the sound of the tocsin; the chiefs of the Girondists, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of their friends, all repaired to the post of danger. They had passed the night in the house of a common friend, assembled together armed, and resolved to sell their lives dearly; but at daybreak they left their asylum, and took their seats in the Convention as the tocsin was sounding. Garat persisted in maintaining that there was nothing to fear; that a *moral insurrection* alone was in contemplation. Paché, with hypocritical zeal, declared that he had doubled the Guards of the Convention, and forbid the cannon of alarm to be discharged. At that instant, the sound of the artillery was heard; the agitation of the Assembly immediately became extreme. "I demand," said Thuriot, "that the Commission of Twelve be instantly dissolved."—"And I," said Tallien, "that the sword of the law strike the conspirators in the bosom of the Convention." The Girondists insisted that Henriot, the commander-in-chief, should be called to the bar, for sounding the cannon of alarm without the authority of the Convention. "If a combat commences," said Vergniaud, "whatever be its result, it will ruin the Republic. Let all the members swear to die at their posts." They all took the oath; in a few hours it was forgotten. "Dissolve the Commission

of Twelve," said Danton, with his tremendous voice ; " the cannon has sounded. If you have any political discretion you will take advantage of the public agitation to furnish you with an excuse for retracing your steps, and regaining your lost popularity. I address myself to those deputies who have some regard to the situation in which they are placed, and not to those insane mortals who listen to nothing but their passions, Hesitate no longer, therefore, to satisfy the people."—" What people ?" exclaimed Vergniaud. " That people," replied Danton, " that immense body, which is our advanced guard ; which hates alike every species of tyranny, and that base moderation which would speedily bring it back. Hasten then to satisfy them ; save them from the aristocrats ; save them from their own anger ; and if the movement should continue when this is done, Paris will soon annihilate the factions who disturb its tranquillity."[1]

[1] Mig. i. 266. Th. iv. 234, 240, 243. Lac. ii. 73.

They surround and assail the Convention.

The Tuileries were blockaded by the multitude ; their presence, and the vociferous language of the petitioners, who were successively admitted to the bar of the Assembly, encouraged the Jacobins to attempt the instant destruction of their opponents. Barere, and the Committee of Public Safety, proposed as a compromise, that the Commission of Twelve should be dissolved ; Robespierre and his associates urged the immediate arrest of the Girondists :— " Citizens," said he, " let us not lose our time in vain clamours, and insignificant propositions. This day is perhaps the last of the struggles of freedom against tyranny."—" Move, then," exclaimed Vergniaud.— " Yes," said he ; " I move, and my motion is against you ! Against you, who, after the Revolution of August 10, strove to lead to the scaffold the men who

CHAP. IX. 1793. achieved it; against you, who have never ceased to urge measures fatal to the prosperity of Paris; against you, who endeavoured to save the tyrant; against you, who have conspired with Dumourier to overthrow the Republic; against you, who have unrelentingly attacked those whose heads Dumourier demanded; against you, whose criminal vengeance has provoked the cries of indignation, which you now reproach as a crime to those who have suffered from it.—I move the immediate accusation of those who have conspired with Dumourier, and are specified in the petitions of the people." The Assembly, moved by the violence with which they were surrounded, deemed it the most prudent course to adopt the proposal of Barere, and the Committee, for the Suppression of the Commission, without the violent proposals of the Jacobins; a ruinous precedent of submission to popular violence, which soon brought about their total subjugation.[1]

[1] Mig. i. 268. Lac. ii. 73. Toul. iii. 413. Th. iv. 251, 252.

But the Revolutionists had no intention of stopping half-way in their career of violence. On the evening of the 31st, Billaud Varennes declared in the Club of the Jacobins, "That they had only half done their work; it must be instantly completed, before the people have time to cool in their ardour."—"Be assured," said Bourdon d' l'Oise, "that all those who wish to establish a burgage aristocracy will soon begin to reflect on their proceedings. Already they ask, when urged to put themselves in insurrection, Against whom are we to revolt? The aristocracy is destroyed, the clergy are destroyed. Who, then, are our oppressors?" Lest any such reaction should take place, they resolved to keep the people continually in agitation. The 1st of June was devoted to completing the preparations; in the evening, Marat himself

mounted the steeple of the Hotel de Ville, and sounded the tocsin. The générale beat through the night, and Paris was under arms by daybreak on the morning of the 2d.[1]

[1] Mig. i. 269. Th. iv. 258, 259. Toul. iii. 414.

On this, the last day that they were to meet in this world, the Girondists dined together to deliberate on the means of defence which yet remained in the desperate state of their fortunes. Their opinions, as usual, were much divided. Some thought that they should remain firm at their posts, and die on their curule chairs, defending to the last extremity the sacred character with which they were invested. Petion, Buzot, and Gensonné, supported that mournful and magnanimous resolution. Barbaroux, consulting only his impetuous courage, was desirous to brave his enemies by his presence in the Convention. Others, among whom were Louvet, strenuously maintained that they should instantly abandon the Convention, where their deliberations were no longer free, and the majority were intimidated by the daggers of the Jacobins, and retire each into his own department, to return to Paris with such a force as should avenge the cause of the national representation. The deliberation was still going forward, when the clang of the tocsin and the rolling of the drums warned them that the insurrection had commenced; and they broke up without having come to any determination.[2]

[2] Th. iv 260.

At eight o'clock, Henriot put himself at the head of the immense columns of armed men assembled round the Hotel de Ville, presented himself before the Council of the Municipality, and declared, in the name of the insurgent people, that they would not lay down their arms till they had obtained the arrest of the obnoxious deputies.

The forces assembled on this occasion were most

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formidable. One hundred and sixty pieces of cannon, with tumbrils, and waggons of balls complete, furnaces to heat them red-hot, lighted matches, and drawn swords in the hands of the gunners, resembled rather the preparations for the siege of a powerful fortress, than demonstrations against a pacific legislature. In addition to this, several battalions, who had marched that morning for La Vendée, received counter orders, and re-entered Paris in a state of extreme irritation. They were instantly supplied with assignats, worth five francs each, and ranged themselves round Henriot, ready to execute his commands, even against the Convention. After haranguing them in the Place de Grève, he proceeded to the other insurgents, put himself at ther head, and marched to the Carrousel. By ten o'clock, the whole avenues to the Tuileries were blockaded by dense columns and artillery; and eighty thousand armed men surrounded the defenceless representatives of the people.[1]

[1] Mig. i. 269. Toul. iii. 415, 424. Th. iv. 261, 262.

Vehement Debate in the Assembly.

Few only of the proscribed deputies were present at this meeting. The intrepid Lanjuinais was among the number; from the Tribune, he drew a picture, in true and frightful colours, of the state of the Assembly, deliberating for three days under the poniards of assassins, threatened without by a furious multitude, domineered within by a faction, who wielded at will its violence, descending from degradation to degradation, rewarded for its condescension with arrogance, for its submission by outrage. "As long as I am permitted to raise my voice in this place," said he, "I shall never suffer the national representation to be degraded in my person. Hitherto you have done nothing; you have only suffered; you have sanctioned every thing required of you. An insurrection assembles, and names a committee to organize

a revolt, with a commander of the armed force to direct it; and you tolerate the insurrection, the committee, the commander." At these words, the cries of the Mountain drowned his voice, and the Jacobins rushed forward to drag him from the Tribune; but he held fast, and the President at length succeeded in restoring silence. "I demand," he concluded, "that all the Revolutionary authorities of Paris be instantly dissolved; that every thing done during the last three days be annulled; that all who arrogate to themselves an illegal authority be declared out of the pale of the law." He had hardly concluded, when the insurgent petitioners entered, and demanded his own arrest, and that of the other Girondists. Their language was brief and decisive. "The citizens of Paris," said they, "have been four days under arms; for four days they have demanded from their mandatories redress of their rights, so scandalously violated; and for four days their mandatories have done nothing to satisfy them. The conspirators must instantly be placed under arrest: You must instantly save the people, or they will take their safety into their own hands."—"Save the people," exclaimed the Jacobins; "save your colleagues, by agreeing to their provisional arrest." Barere and the neutral party urged the proscribed deputies to have the generosity to give in their resignations in order to tranquillize the public mind. Isnard, Lanthenas, and others, complied with the request; Lanjuinais positively refused. "Hitherto," said he, "I have shown some courage; I will not fail at the last extremity: You need not expect from me either suspension or resignation." Being violently interrupted by the left, he added, "When the ancients prepared a sacrifice, they crowned the victim with flowers and garlands

CHAP. IX 1793. when they conducted him to the altar; the priest sacrificed him, but added not insult or injury. But you, more cruel than they, commit outrages on the victim, who is making no efforts to avert his fate."— "I have sworn to die at my post," said Barbaroux; "I will keep my oath. Bend, if you please, before the Municipality, you who refused to arrest their wickedness; or rather imitate us, whom their fury immediately demands: Wait, and brave their fury. You may compel me to sink under their daggers: You shall not make me fall at their feet."[1]

[1] Mig. i. 270, 271. Lac. ii. 72, 73. Toul. iii. 430, 434. Th. iv. 264, 265.

They move out of the Hall.

While the Assembly was in the utmost agitation, and swayed alternately by terror and admiration, Lacroix, an intimate friend of Danton's, entered with a haggard air, and announced that he had been stopped at the gate, and that the Convention was imprisoned within its walls. The secret of the revolt became now evident; it was not conducted by Danton and the Mountain, but by Robespierre, Marat, and the Municipality, "We must instantly avenge," said Danton, "this outrage on the national representation: Let us go forth, and awe the rebels by the majesty of the legislature." Headed by its President, the Convention set out, and moved in a body, with the signs of distress, to the principal gate leading to the Place de Carrousel. They were there met by Henriot on horseback, with his sword in his hand, at the head of the most devoted battalions of the Fauxbourgs. "What do the people demand?" said the President, Herault de Sechelles; "the Convention is occupied with nothing but their welfare."—

But are driven back by the armed Bands.

"Herault," replied Henriot, "the people are not to be deceived with fine words; they demand that four-and-twenty culpable deputies be given up."—"Demand rather that we should all be given up," exclaimed

those who surrounded the President. "Cannoneers! to your pieces!" replied Henriot. Two guns, charged with grape-shot, were pointed against the Assembly, which involuntarily fell back; and after in vain attempting to find the means of escape at the other gates of the garden, returned in dismay to the hall. Marat followed them, at the head of a body of brigands. "I order you, in the name of the people, to enter, to deliberate, and to obey."[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 76, 77. Mig. i. 268, 272. Th. iv. 268, 270.

When the members were seated, Couthon rose. "You have now had convincing evidence," said he, "that the Convention is perfectly free; the indignation of the people is only pointed against certain unworthy members: We are surrounded by their homage and affection: Let us obey alike our own conscience, and their wishes. I propose that Lanjuinais, Vergniaud, Sillery, Gensonné, Le Hardi, Guadet, Petion, Brissot, Boileau, Birotteau, Valaze, Gomaise, Bertrand, Gardieu, Keverlegan, Mellevant, Bergoien, Barbaroux, Ledon, Buzot, Lasource, Rabaut, Salles, Chambon, Gorsas, Grangeneuve, Le Sage, Vigie, Louvet, and Henri Lariviere, be immediately put under arrest." With the dagger at their throats, the Convention passed the decree: A large body had the courage to protest against the violence, and refuse to vote. This suicidal measure was carried by the sole votes of the Mountain, and a few adherents: the great majority refused to have any share in it. The multitude gave tumultuous cheers, and dispersed; their victory was complete; the Municipality of Paris had overthrown the National Assembly.[2]

The thirty Girondists are given up and imprisoned.

[2] Mig. i. 272, 273. Lac. ii. 78, 79. Th. iv. 272.

The political career of the Girondists was terminated by this day; thenceforward they were known only as individuals, by their heroic conduct in adversity and death. Their strife with the Jacobins was

CHAP. IX. 1793. a long struggle between two classes, who invariably succeed each other in the lead of revolutionary convulsions. The rash and reckless, but able and generous party, which trusted to the force of reason in popular assemblies, perished, because they strove to arrest the torrent they had let loose, to avenge the massacres of September, avoid the execution of the King, resist the institution of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and the Committee of Public Safety. With the excitement of more vehement passions, with the approach of more pressing dangers, with the advent of times when moderation seemed a crime, they expired. Thereafter, when every legal form was violated, every appeal against violence stifled by the imprisonment of the Girondists, democratic despotism marched in its career without an obstacle; and the terrible Dictatorship, composed of the Committee of Public Safety and the Revolutionary Tribunal, was erected in resistless sovereignty.[1]

[1] Th. iv. 275, 276.

Many escape into the Provinces.

The proscribed members were at first put under arrest in their own houses. Several found the means of escape before the order for their imprisonment was issued. Barbaroux, Petion, Lanjuinais, Henri Lariviere, arrived at Caen, in Normandy, where a feeble attempt at resistance to the usurped authority of the Parisian mob was made, which speedily yielded to the efforts of the Jacobine emissaries. Louvet escaped to Bourdeaux, and subsequently wandered for months among the forests and caverns of the Jura, where he employed his hours of solitude in composing the able Memoirs of his Life. Vergniaud, Guadet, Brissot, and the other leaders, were soon afterwards consigned to prison, from whence, after a painful interval, they were conducted to the scaffold.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 293.

Their trial and condemnation took place in Octo-

ber, before the Revolutionary Tribunal. The Convention passed a decree authorizing their trial; the indictment against them was general, but its specific charges affected only five or six of the accused. They insisted upon the right of separate defence; the Jacobins, the Committee of Public Safety, and the Convention, held this demand decisive evidence of a new conspiracy. To obviate its supposed danger, and guard against the effect of the well-known eloquence of the accused, which had already strongly moved the audience, the Revolutionary Tribunal, after the trial had proceeded some days, obtained from the Convention a decree, authorizing them to convict and pass sentence, as soon as they were convinced of the guilt of the accused, *whether they had been heard in their defence or not.*[1]

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Their Trial and Condemnation.

October 19.

[1] Toul. iv. 114.

The grounds of the accusation were of the most contemptible kind; Chaumette recounted all the struggles of the Municipality with the Côté Droit, without adding a single fact that could inculpate the accused; the wretch Hebert recounted the particulars of his arrest by the Commission of Twelve, and alleged that Roland had endeavoured to corrupt the public writers, by offering to buy up his obscene journal, the Pere Duchesne; Destournelle deponed, that the accused had exerted themselves to crush the Municipality, declared against the massacres in the prisons, and laboured to institute a departmental guard. Chabot was the most virulent of the witnesses against them; he ascribed to them a Machiavelian policy throughout all the Revolution; endeavouring to convert every thing to their own profit, and even permitting the massacres of September, in order to cut off some of their enemies among the victims.[2]

Th. iv. 389. Mig. ii. 293. Lac. ii. 78. 99. Louv. p. 1.

[2] Th. v. 384.

The prosecution lasted nine days. At the end of that time, the jury declared themselves convinced; the

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eloquence of Vergniaud, the vehemence of Brissot, had pleaded in vain. The Court then read to the accused the decree of the Convention, empowering them to *terminate* the proceedings, as soon as the jury had declared their minds made up; they saw upon this that their fate was determined, as they were to be condemned, without being heard in their defence. They all rose, and, by loud expressions of indignation, drowned the voice of the President, who read their sentence. Valazé stabbed himself with a poniard, and perished in presence of the Court, who immediately ordered that his dead body should be borne on a car to the place of execution, and beheaded with the other prisoners. La Source exclaimed: "I die at a time when the people have lost their reason: You will die as soon as they recover it." The other prisoners embraced each other, and exclaimed, "Vive la Republique." The audience, though chiefly composed of the assassins of September 2, were melted to tears.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 114. Lac. ii. 99. Mig. ii. 294. Th. v. 389, 390, 391.

Their heroic death.

The anxiety of his friends had provided Vergniaud with a certain and speedy poison: He refused to make use of it, in order that he might accompany his friends to the scaffold. The eloquence of Vergniaud which poured forth the night before his execution, on the expiring liberty of France, in strains of unprecedented splendour, entranced even the melancholy inmates of the prison. The illustrious prisoners were conducted, on the 31st October, to the place of execution. They marched together with a firm step, singing the Revolutionary song, which they applied by a slight change to their own situation:

"Allons enfans de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé,
Contre nous de tyrannie
Le couteau sanglant est levé."

When they arrived at the place of execution they

mutually embraced, exclaiming, "Vive la Republique!" Sillery ascended first; he bowed with a grave air to the people, and received with unshrinking firmness the fatal stroke. They all died with the resolution of Romans, protesting, with their last breath, their attachment to freedom and the Republic.[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 99, 100. Th. v. 392. Mig. ii 294. Toul. iv. 115. Riouffe, 51, 52.

A young man, named Girey Dufocé, was brought to the bar of the Revolutionary Tribunal. The president asked if he had been a friend of Brissot. "I had that happiness." — "What is your opinion of him?"—"That he lived like Aristides, and died like Sidney!" was the intrepid answer. He was forthwith sent to the scaffold, where he perished with the firmness of his departed friend.[2]

[2] Lac. ii. 100.

Rabaud St Etienne, one of the most enlightened and virtuous of the proscribed deputies, had escaped soon after the 2d June from Paris. Tired of wandering through the provinces, he returned to the capital, and lived concealed in the house of one of those faithful friends, of whom the Revolution produced so many examples. His wife, influenced by the most tender attachment, incessantly watched over his safety. In the street, one day, she met one of the Jacobins, who assured her of his interest in her husband, and professed his desire to give him an asylum in his own house. Rabaud being informed of the circumstance, and desirous of saving his generous host from farther danger, informed the Jacobin of his place of retreat, and assigned an hour of the night for him to come and remove him from it. The perfidious wretch came accompanied by gens-d'armes, who dragged their victim, with his friendly host and hostess, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, whence they were sent to the scaffold.[3] In despair at having been the instrument,

[3] Ibid.

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however innocent, of such treachery, his wife, in the flower of youth and beauty, put herself to death.

Trial and Death of Madame Roland.

Madame Roland was the next victim. This heroic woman had been early involved in the proscription of the Girondists, of whom her splendid talents had almost rendered her the head. Confined in the prison of the Abbaye, she employed the tedious months of captivity in composing the Memoirs, which so well illustrate her eventful life. With a firm hand she traced, in that gloomy abode, the joyous as well as the melancholy periods of her existence; the brilliant dreams and ardent patriotism of her youth; the stormy and eventful scenes of her maturer years; the horrors and anguish of her latest days. While suffering under the fanaticism of the people, when about to die under the violence of the mob, she never abandoned the principles of her youth, or regretted her martyrdom in the cause of freedom. If the thoughts of her daughter and her husband sometimes melted her to tears, she regained her firmness on every important occasion. Her Memoirs evince unbroken serenity of mind, though she was frequently interrupted in their composition by the cries of those whom the executioners were dragging from the adjoining cells to the scaffold.[1]

[1] Riouffe 56, 57. Lac. ii. 100. Roland, i. *passim*, and 97.

Her generous conduct.

On the day of her trial she was dressed with scrupulous care in white. Her fine black hair fell in profuse curls to her waist; but the display of its beauty was owing to her jailors, who had deprived her of all means of dressing it. She chose that dress as emblematic of the purity of her mind. Her advocate, M. Chaveau Lagarde, visited her to receive her last instructions; drawing a ring from her finger, she said,—"To-morrow I shall be no more; I know well the fate which awaits me; your kind assistance could

be of no avail; it would endanger you without saving me. Do not, therefore, I pray you, come to the Tribunal, but accept this as the last testimony of my regard." Her defence, composed by herself the night before the trial, is one of the most eloquent and touching monuments of the Revolution. Her answers to the interrogatories of the judges, the dignity of her manner, the beauty of her figure, melted even the Revolutionary audience with pity. Finding they could implicate her in no other way, the president asked her if she was acquainted with the place of her husband's retreat. She replied, that "whether she knew it or not she would not reveal it, and that there was no law by which she was obliged, in a court of justice, to violate the strongest feelings of nature." Upon this she was immediately condemned. When the reading of her sentence was concluded, she rose and said, "You judge me worthy to share the fate of the great men whom you have assassinated. I shall endeavour to imitate their firmness on the scaffold." She regained her prison with an elastic step and beaming eye. Her whole soul appeared absorbed in the heroic feelings with which she was animated.[1]

[1] Roland, i. 40, 41, 43. ii. 439 App. Q p. 425. Riouffe, 57.

She was conveyed to the scaffold in the same car with a man whose firmness was not equal to her own. While passing along the streets, her whole anxiety appeared to be to support his courage. She did this with so much simplicity and effect, that she frequently brought a smile on the lips which were about to perish. At the place of execution she bowed before the gigantic statue of Liberty, and pronounced the memorable words, "Oh, Liberty! how many crimes are committed in your name!"[3] When they arrived at the foot of the scaffold, she had the generosity to renounce, in favour of her companion, the privilege of being first

CHAP. IX. executed. " Ascend first," said she, " let me at least
1793. spare you the pain of seeing my blood flow." Turning to the executioner, she asked if he would consent to that arrangement; he replied, " That his orders were that she should die the first."—" You cannot," said she, with a smile, " I am sure, refuse a woman her last request?" Undismayed by the spectacle which immediately ensued, she calmly bent her head under the guillotine, and perished with the serenity she had evinced ever since her imprisonment.[1]

[1] Roland, i. 43, 44. Lac. x. 278.

Death of M. Roland.

Madame Roland had predicted that her husband would not long survive her. Her prophecy was speedily fulfilled. A few days afterwards, he was found dead on the road between Paris and Rouen; he had stabbed himself in that situation, that he might not, by the situation in which his body was found, betray the generous friends who had sheltered him in his misfortunes. In his pocket was contained a letter, in these terms:—"Whoever you are, oh! passenger, who discover my body, respect the remains of the unfortunate. They are those of a man who consecrated his whole life to be useful to his country; who died as he had lived, virtuous and unsullied. May my fellow-citizens embrace more humane sentiments; not fear, but indignation, made me quit my retreat when I heard of the murder of my wife. I loathed a world stained with so many crimes."[2]

[2] Roland, i. 45, 46. Lac. x. 278.

The other chiefs of the party, dispersed in the provinces of France, underwent innumerable dangers, and made escapes more wonderful even than those which romance has figured. Louvet owed his salvation to the fidelity of female attachment. Barbaroux, Buzot, Petion, and Valade, were concealed at St Emelion, in a cavern, by a sister of Guadet. A few only escaped the anxious search of the Jacobins;[3] their Memoirs

[3] Memoires de Buzot, Louvet, and Barbaroux, *passim*, and Lac. x. 280.

evince a curious proof of the indignation of enthusiastic but virtuous minds at the triumph of guilty ambition. CHAP. IX. 1793.

Reflections on the overthrow of the Girondists.

Thus perished the party of the Gironde, reckless in its measures, culpable for its rashness, but illustrious from its talents, glorious in its fall. It embraced all the men who were philanthropists from feeling, or republicans from principle; the brave, the humane, the benevolent. But with them were also combined within its ranks numbers of a baser kind; many who employed their genius for the advancement of their ambition, and were careless of their country, provided they elevated their party. It was overthrown by a faction of coarser materials, but more determined character, with less remains of conscientious feeling, but more acquaintance with practical wickedness. Adorned by the most splendid talents, supported by the most powerful eloquence, actuated at times by the most generous intentions, it perished the victim of a base and despicable faction; of men sprung from the dregs of the populace, and impelled by guilty and selfish ambition. Such ever has, and ever will be, the result of revolutionary convulsions in society, when not steadily opposed in the outset by a firm union of the higher classes of the community; in the collision of opposite factions, the virtuous and the moderate will too often be overcome by the reckless and the daring. Prudence clogs their enterprise; virtue checks their ambition; humanity paralyzes their exertions. They fall, because they recoil from the violence which becomes in disastrous times essential to command success in revolutions.

The principles of this celebrated party disqualified them from taking an energetic or successful part in public affairs. Their aversion to violence, their hor-

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ror at blood, rendered them totally unfit to struggle with their sanguinary antagonists. They deemed it better to suffer than to commit violence; to die in the attempt to preserve freedom rather than live by the atrocities which would subvert it. Their principles in the end, when driven to extremities, were those, so finely expressed by Louis XVIII., when urged to assassinate Napoleon, "In our family we are murdered, but we never commit murder."[1]

[1] Memoires sur Louis XVIII. i. 221. Buzot, 10.

Their greatest fault, and it is one which all their subsequent misfortunes could not expiate, consisted in the agitation which they so sedulously maintained in the public mind. The storm which their eloquence created, it was beyond the power of their wisdom to allay. They roused the people against the throne on the 10th August; they failed in saving the monarch on the 21st January, and died under the axe of the populace, whose furious passions they had awakened. Such is the natural progress of Revolution. Its early leaders become themselves the objects of jealousy when their rule is established; the turbulent and the ambitious combine against an authority which they are desirous of supplanting; stronger flattery to popular licentiousness, more extravagant protestations of public zeal, speedily rouse the multitude against those who have obtained the influence which they desire for themselves. Power falls into the hands of the most desperate; they gain every thing, because they scruple at nothing.

The Girondists, and the whole constitutional party of France, experienced, when they attempted to coerce their former allies, and restrain the march of the Revolution, the necessary effect of the false principles on which they had acted, and the perilous nature of the doctrines which they had taken such pains to

spread through the people. They were never able thereafter to command the assistance of either of the great parties in the state, of the holders of property, or the advocates for spoliation. The former could place no confidence in them after having confiscated the church property, persecuted the priests, carried the cruel decree against the emigrants, provoked the revolt of the 10th August, and voted for the death of the King; the latter felt against them all the bitterness of personal deceit and party treachery, when they strove to wield the power of the executive against the men with whom they had formerly acted, and the principles by which they had excited so mighty a convulsion. It is this feeling of distrust on the one hand, and treachery on the other, which so speedily annihilates the power of the authors of a revolution, when they endeavour to restrain its excesses; and renders the leader of a mighty host in one year utterly powerless and contemptible in the next. It is the charge of inconsistency which they never can get over; the bitterness excited by an abandonment of principle, which paralyzes all their efforts even to correct its abuses. The Girondists and Constitutionalists experienced this cruel reverse in the most signal manner in all the latter stages of the Revolution. Lafayette wielded the whole power of France when he arrayed the National Guard against the Monarchy in 1789; but he could not raise thirty men to join his standard in defence of the throne in 1792; and the leader of the populace on the 5th October, owed his escape from their ferocity solely to his confinement in an Austrian dungeon: Vergniaud and the Girondists were all-powerful while they were declaiming against the supposed treachery of the court, and inflaming the nation to plunge into an European war; but

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when they inveighed against the massacres in the prisons, and sought indirectly to save the life of the monarch whom they had dethroned, they became to the last degree unpopular, and were consigned to prison and the scaffold amidst the applause of the very multitude which had so recently followed them with acclamations.

These facts suggest an important conclusion in political science, which is, that the injustice and violence of a revolutionary party can hardly ever be effectually controlled by those who have participated in its principles; but that the only hope of the friends of order in such circumstances, is to be found in those who, under every intimidation, have resolutely resisted measures of injustice. There is something in courage and consistency which commands respect, even amidst the bitterness of faction; and if a reaction against the reign of violence is ever to arise, its leaders must be found, not among those who have abandoned, but who have ever resisted the march of revolution. It costs little to a soldier to fight under the banners of an able and resolute adversary; but he will never place confidence in a general who has abandoned his colours during the combat. The Republican writers are all in error when they assert that the horrors of the Revolution were owing to the King not having cordially thrown himself into the arms of the Constitutional party. With such allies he never could have mastered the Jacobin party, supported as they were by so large a proportion of the urban population of France: it was the Royalists alone who could have effectually taken advantage of the strong reaction against the Revolution, which the first open acts of violence against the throne occasioned. And the event has abundantly proved the justice of these principles. The Orleans

and Girondist parties were never able to oppose any serious resistance to the progress of the Revolution, and history can hardly find a skirmish to record, fought in defence of their principles ;* whereas the peasants of La Vendée, without any external aid, and under every disadvantage, waged a desperate war with the Republic, and after six hundred battles had been fought, and a million of men slaughtered, were still on the accession of Napoleon unsubdued. It was the general desertion of the country by the emigrants, the treachery of the army, and the irresolution of the King, which really paved the way for the Jacobin excesses. CHAP. IX. 1793.

But although the previous excesses and reckless ambition of the Girondists precluded them from opposing any effectual resistance to the progress of Revolution, they did much to redeem their ruinous errors, by the serenity of their death. Posterity invariably declares for the cause of virtue; the last impressions are those which are the most durable; the principles, which in the end prove triumphant, are those which find a responsive echo in the human heart. Already this effect has become conspicuous. The talents, the vigour, the energy of the Jacobins, are forgotten in the blood which stained their triumphs ; the imprudent zeal, the irresolute conduct, the inexperienced credulity of the Girondists, are lost in the Roman heroism of their fall. The Reign of Terror, the night of the Revolution, was of short duration ; the stars which were extinguished in its firmament, only turned the eyes of the world with more anxiety to the coming dawn. But the eloquence of Vergni-

* The resistance at Lyons and Toulon, though begun under Girondist colours, before the fighting began, was in reality conducted by the Royalist party.

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and, the heroism of Madame Roland, have created a lasting impression upon the world; and while history, which records the dreadful evils which their impetuous declamations produced upon their country, cannot absolve them from the imputation of rash and perilous innovation, of reckless and inconsiderate ambition, it must respect some of the motives which led even to errors, whose consequences were then in a great degree unknown, and venerate the courage with which, in the last extremity, they met their fate.

CHAPTER X.

REIGN OF TERROR—FROM THE FALL OF THE GIRONDISTS TO THE DEATH OF DANTON.

Formation of a new Government by the Jacobins—Vast Powers conferred upon the Committee of Public Safety—State of the Provinces—Of Lyons, Bourdeaux, and Marseilles—General Coalition of Departments against the Convention—Measures to meet it: it is Dissolved—Immense Power of the Committee—Law of suspected Persons—Formation of Revolutionary Committees over all France—Their Immense Numbers and Expense—New Era Established, and Sunday abolished—Charlotte Corday—Her character—She resolves to assassinate Marat—Kills him—Her Trial and Death—Apotheosis of Marat—Arrest of seventy-three Members of the Convention—Situation of Marie Antoinette—Cruel Treatment and Death of the Dauphin—Trial of the Queen—Her heroic Conduct and Execution—And Character—Violation of the Tombs of St Denis—Destruction of Monuments over all France—Abjuration of Christianity by the Municipality—The Goddess of Reason introduced into the Convention—Notre Dame named the Temple of Reason—Universal abandonment of Religion, and closing of the Churches—General and excessive Dissolution of Manners—Confiscation of the Property of Hospitals and the Poor—Arrest and Death of Bailly, of Barnave, Condorcet, and Custine—Trial and Execution of the Duke of Orleans—Estrangement of the Dantonists, and ruling Power of the Municipality—Publication of the Old Cordelier—Efforts of Danton to detach Robespierre from the Municipality—Secret Agreement between Robespierre and the Municipality, by which Danton is abandoned to the latter, and Hebert, Chaumette, and others, to the former—Announcement of the Projects in the Convention—Proscription of the Anarchists—Their disgraceful Death—Rupture of Danton and Robespierre—Arrest of the former, with Camille Desmoulins—Violent agitation in the Assembly—Their Trial and Execution—Resistless Power of Robespierre—General Reflections on the successive Destruction of the Revolutionists.

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"THE rule of a mob," says Aristotle, "is the worst of tyrannies;"* and so experience has proved it, from the caprice of the Athenian democracy, to the proscriptions of the French Revolution. The reason is permanent, and must remain unaltered while society

* Τυττων των τυραννιδων τελευταια ἡ δημοκρατια.—Arist. de Politica.

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holds together. In contests for power, a monarch has, in general, to dread only the efforts of a rival for the throne; an aristocracy, the ascendency of a faction in the nobility; the populace, the vegeance of all the superior classes in the state. Hence, the safety of the first is usually secured by the destruction of a single rival, and his immediate adherents; the jealousy of the second extinguished by the proscription or exile of a limited number of families; but the terrors of the last require the destruction of whole ranks in society. Measures, dictated by the alarm for individuals, become unnecessary when they have perished; those levelled against the influence of classes, require to be pursued till the class itself is destroyed.

It was not a mere thirst for blood which made Marat and Robespierre declare and act upon the principle, that there could be no security for the Republic till two hundred and sixty thousand heads had fallen. Hardly any men are cruel for cruelty's sake; the leaders of the Jacobins were not more so, than the reckless and ambitious of any other country would be if exposed to the influence of similar passions. Ambition is the origin of desperate measures, because it renders men sensible only of the dictates of an insatiable passion; terror is the real source of cruelty. Men esteem the lives of others lightly when their own are at stake. The revolutionary innovations being directed against the whole aristocratic and influential classes, their vengeance was felt to be implacable, and no security could be expected to the democratical leaders, till their whole opponents were destroyed.

In the strife of contending classes, the sphere of individual vengeance is fearfully augmented. Not one, but fifty leaders have terrors to allay, rivals to extinguish, hatred to gratify; with the multitude of

aspirants to power, increase the number of sacrifices that are required. Amidst the contests for influence, and the dread of revenge, every man abandons his individual to his political connexions; private friendship, public character, yield to the force of personal apprehension. A forced coalition, between the most dissimilar characters, takes place from the pressure of similar danger; friends give up friends to the vengeance of political adversaries; individual security, private revenge, are purchased by the sacrifice of ancient attachment.

Formation of a new Government by the Jacobins.

France experienced the truth of these principles with unmitigated severity, during the later stages of the Revolution. But it was not immediately that the leaders of the victorious faction ventured upon the practical application of their principles. The administration had been in the hands of the Girondists; some central power was indispensably required, on their overthrow, to put a period to the anarchy which threatened the country. The Committee of Public Safety presented the skeleton of a government already formed. Created some months before, it was at first composed of the neutral party; the victorious Jacobins, after the 31st May, placed themselves in possession of its power. Robespierre, St Just, Couthon, Billaud, Varennes, and Collot d'Herbois, were elected members, and speedily ejected Herault de Sechelles, and the other partisans of Danton. To the ruling Jacobins, the different departments of government were assigned; St Just was intrusted with the duty of denouncing its enemies; Couthon, with bringing forward its general measures; Billaud, Varennes, and Collot d'Herbois, with the management of the departments; Carnot was made minister of war; Barrere,

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the panegyrist and orator of the government; Robespierre, general dictator over all.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 295, 296. Toul. iv. 98. Th. v. 94, 95.

The most extravagant joy prevailed among the Jacobins at their decisive triumph. "The people," said Robespierre, "have by their conduct confounded all their opponents. Eighty thousand men have been under arms nearly a week, and not one shop has been pillaged, not one drop of blood shed; and they have proved by that, whether the accusation was well founded, that they wished to profit by the disorders to commit murder and pillage. Their insurrection was spontaneous; the result of a universal moral conviction; and the Mountain, itself feeble and irresolute, showed that it had no hand in producing it. The insurrection was a great moral and popular effort, worthy of the enlightened people among whom it arose." Under such plausible colours did the revolutionists veil a movement, which destroyed the only virtuous part of the democracy, and delivered over France in fetters to the Reign of Terror.[2]

[2] Th. v. 3.

The aspect of the Convention, after this great event, was entirely changed from what it had ever been before. Terror had mastered their resistance; proscription had thinned their ranks. The hall was generally silent. The right, and the majority of the centre, never voted, but seemed, by their withdrawal from any active part, to condemn the whole proceedings of the Jacobins, and await intelligence from the provinces as the signal for action. All the decrees proposed by the ruling party, were adopted in silence, without any discussion.[3]

[3] Ib. v. 7.

By a decree of the Assembly, the whole power of government was vested in the hands of the Decemvirs, till the conclusion of a general peace. They made no concealment of the despotic nature of the authori-

ty with which they were thus invested. "You have nothing now to dread," said St Just, "from the enemies of freedom; all we have to do is to make its friends triumphant, and that must be done at all hazards. In the critical situation of the Republic, it is in vain to re-establish the Constitution; it would offer impunity to every attack on liberty, by wanting the force to repress them. You are too far removed from conspiracies to have the means of checking them; the sword of the law must be intrusted to surer hands; it must turn everywhere, and fall with the rapidity of lightning on all its enemies."[1] In silent dread the Assembly and the people heard the terrible declaration; its justice was universally felt; the insupportable evils of anarchy could only be arrested by the sanguinary arm of despotism.

Vast powers conferred upon the Committee of Public Safety.

[1] Mig. ii. 296. Toul. iv. 298.

While the practical administration of affairs was thus lodged with despotic power in the hands of the Committee of Public Safety, the general superintendence of the police was vested in another Committee, styled of General Safety, subordinate to the former, but still possessed of a most formidable authority. Inferior to both in power, and now deprived of much of its political importance by the vast influence of the Committee of Public Safety, the Municipality of Paris began to turn its attention to the internal regulation of the city, and there exercised its power with the most despotic rigour. It took under its cognizance the police of the metropolis, the public subsistence, the markets, the public worship, the theatre, the courtezans, and framed on all these subjects a variety of minute and vexatious regulations, which were speedily adopted over all France. Chaumette, its public accuser, ever sure of the applause of the multitude, exerted in all these particulars the most rigorous au-

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thority. Consumed by an incessant desire to subject every thing to new regulations, continually actuated by the wish to invade domestic liberty, this legislator of the market-places and warehouses, became daily more vexatious and formidable; while Paché, indolent and imperturbable, agreed to every thing which was proposed, and left to Chaumette all the influence of popularity with the rabble.[1]

[1] Th. v. 94, 96.

State of the Provinces.

The correspondence which the Jacobins carried on over all France, with the most ardent and factious in the towns and villages, speedily gave them the entire command of the country. The democratic party, in possession of all the Municipalities in the departments, in consequence of their being elected by universal suffrage, armed with the powers of a terrible police, intrusted with the right of making domiciliary visits, of disarming or imprisoning the suspected persons, soon obtained an irresistible authority. In vain the armed sections and battalions of the National Guard strove to resist; want of union and organization paralyzed all their efforts. In almost all the towns of France they had courage enough to take up arms, and everywhere endeavoured to withstand the dreadful tyranny of the magistracies; but these bodies, based on the support and election of the multitude, generally prevailed over the whole class of proprietors, and all the peaceable citizens, who in vain invoked the liberty, tranquillity, and security to property, for the preservation of which they were enrolled. This was, generally speaking, the situation of parties over all France, though the strife was more ardent in those situations where the masses were densest, and danger most evidently threatened the revolutionary party.[2]

[2] Th. iv. 157, 158.

The spirit of faction was, in an especial manner, conspicuous at Lyons. A club of Jacobins was there

formed, composed of deputies from all the clubs of note in the south of France, at the head of which was an ardent republican, of Italian origin, named Chalier, who was at the same time an officer of the Municipality, and President of the Civil Tribunal. The Jacobins had got possession of all the offices in the Municipality, except the Mayoralty, which was still in the hands of a Girondist, of the name of Neviere. The Jacobin Club made use of the utmost efforts to displace him, loudly demanded a Revolutionary Tribunal, and paraded through the streets a guillotine recently sent down from Paris "to strike terror into the traitors and aristocrats." On the other hand, the armed Sections, who were strongly attached to the principles of the Girondists, vigorously exerted themselves to resist the establishment of a tribunal which was shedding such torrents of blood in the capital. Every thing already announced that desperate strife, of which this devoted city so soon became the theatre.[1]

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Of Lyons, Bourdeaux, and Marseilles.

[1] Thiers, iv. 161.

The universal election of ardent and unprincipled democrats to the whole situations in the magistracy, in all the towns of France, under the general suffrage of the inhabitants, in opposition to all the efforts of a powerful, opulent, and, as the event proved, brave and devoted body of citizens in them all, is an instructive fact in political science. It proves how unfit such numerous bodies of men are to be intrusted with the choice of their own rulers in those periods when firmness in the depositaries of power is most required; and how completely under the influence of a highly popular right of suffrage the weight of property is set at nought, even in those commercial cities where it might, *a priori*, have been deemed most considerable. The addition which the revolutionary party received to their power throughout the whole con-

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vulsion, from the firm hold which this popular election gave them of the Municipalities over all France, and the irresistible influence which they everywhere possessed, was one of the principal causes of its rapid and deplorable progress. And it is not the least remarkable circumstance, that this universal and cordial support was given by the vast majority in the commercial towns of France, in opposition to their direct and immediate interests; the looms employed in Lyons and St Etienne having declined from 14,000 to 6000, between 1789 and 1792, under the influence of revolutionary agitation, while, with the failure of their means of subsistence, the democratic fervour of the deluded multitude appeared to be constantly increasing.[1]

[1] Burke, vii. 54, 55.

In the other towns in the South of France, the Girondists were all-powerful, and the utmost horror at the anarchical party, who had obtained the ascendency at Paris, and, in the northern provinces, was already conspicuous. From the mouth of the Rhone to that of the Garonne, these sentiments were nearly universal, and in some even the Municipalities were in the hands of the moderate party. At Bourdeaux, this feeling was so strong, that it already bordered on the feelings of Royalty; while the whole country from the Gironde and the entrance of the Loire, by the shores of the ocean to the mouth of the Seine, was openly attached to the ancient institutions of the country, and beheld with undisguised horror the atrocities with which the revolutionary party had already stained their career.[2]

[2] Th. iv. 160, 163.

General coalition of the Departments against the Convention.

Such was the state of public feeling in France when the Revolution of 31st May, and the fall of the Girondists, took place. That catastrophe put the whole of the southern departments into a flame; the impri-

sonment of the deputies of the National Representatives by the mob of Paris, the open assumption of government by the Municipality of that city, excited the most profound indignation. In most of the cities the magistracy had fallen, as already observed, into the hands of the Jacobins, who were supported by the Parent Club at Paris, and the Executive; while the armed Sections were attached to the opposite system. The catastrophe of the Girondists at Paris brought those conflicting powers almost everywhere into collision. At Marseilles, the Sections rose against the Municipality, and violently seized possession of the Magistracy; at Lyons, a furious combat took place; the Sections took the Hotel de Ville by assault, dispossessed the Magistracy, shut up the Jacobin Club, and gained the command of the city. At Bourdeaux, the arrest of the Girondists, of whose talents they were justly proud, excited the most violent sensation, which was brought to a crisis by the arrival of the fugitive deputies, who announced that their illustrious brethren were in fetters, and in hourly expectation of death.[1]

29th May.

[1] Th. v. 8, 10, 11.

On the 13th June the department of Eure gave the signal of insurrection; it was agreed that four thousand men should march upon Paris to liberate the Convention. Great part of Normandy followed the example, and all the departments of Brittany were in arms. The whole valley of the Loire, with the exception of that which was the theatre of the war of La Vendée, proposed to send deputies to Bourges to depose the usurped authority at Paris. At Bourdeaux, the sensation was extreme. All the constituted authorities assembled together; erected themselves into a commission styled of Public Safety; declared that the Convention was no longer free; appointed an armed

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force, and despatched couriers into all the neighbouring departments. Marseilles sent forth a thundering petition; the whole mountaineers of the Jura were in a ferment; and the departments of the Rhone, the Garonne, and the Pyrenees, joined themselves to the vast confederacy. So far did the spirit of revolt proceed, that at Lyons a prosecution was instituted against Chalier and the leaders of the Jacobin Club; and deputies, to concert measures for their common safety, were received from Marseilles, Bourdeaux, and Caen. Seventy departments were in a state of insurrection; and fifteen only remained, wholly devoted to the faction who had mastered the convention.[1]

[1] Th. v. 13, 14.

Measures to meet it.

Opinions were divided at Paris how to meet so formidable a danger. Barrere, proposed in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, that the revolutionary committees, which had become so formidable throughout France, from their numerous arrests, should be everywhere annulled; that the primary assemblies should be assembled at Paris to name a commander of the armed force, in lieu of Henriot, who had been appointed by the insurgents; and that thirty deputies should be sent as hostages to the provinces. But the Jacobins were not disposed to any measures of conciliation. Robespierre adjourned the consideration of the report of the committee; and Danton, raising the voice so well known in all the perils of the Revolution exclaimed, "The Revolution has passed through many crises, and it will survive this as it has done the others. It is in the moments of a great production that political, like physical bodies, seem menaced by an approaching destruction. The thunder rolls, but it is in the midst of its roar that the great work which is to consummate the happiness of twenty-five millions of men, will be produced." In this spirit the

Convention, instead of yielding, adopted the most vigorous measures, and spoke in the most menacing strain. They declared that Paris, in placing itself in a state of insurrection, had deserved well of the country; that the arrested deputies should forthwith be lodged in prison like ordinary criminals; that a call of the Convention should be made, and all those absent without excuse instantly expelled, and their place supplied by new representatives; that all attempts at correspondence or coalition among the departmental authorities were illegal, and that those who persisted in them should forthwith be sent to Paris; they annulled the resolution of the department of the Eure; ordered all the refractory authorities to be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and sent the most ardent Jacobins into the provinces to enforce submission to the central government.[1]

June 30.

[1] Th. v. 16, 18.

These vigorous measures effectually broke this formidable league. The departments, little accustomed to resist the authority of the government at Paris, returned one by one to submission. Hostile preparations were made at Bourdeaux, Lyons, Rouen, and Marseilles; but the insurgents, without a leader or central point of union, and destitute of all support from the nobility and natural chiefs of the country, were unable to struggle with the energetic Committee of Public Safety, wielding at will the army, the Jacobin Clubs, and the Municipalities. They continued their preparations, however, and refused to send the proscribed authorities to Paris; but their ardour gradually cooled, and in two months the seeds of revolt existed only in vigour at Lyons, Toulon, and Marseilles, where it afterwards brought about a bloody catastrophe.[2]

It is dissolved.

[2] Th. v. 20, 27, 61, 75.

The Convention, shortly after, now wholly under

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the power of the Jacobins, proceeded to the formation of a constitution, the most democratic that ever existed upon earth. Eight days completed the work. Every Frenchman of twenty-one years of age was entitled to exercise the rights of a citizen; a deputy was named by every fifty thousand citizens. On the 1st of May of every year, the primary assemblies were to meet, without any convocation, to renew the deputies. It was adopted without discussion, and instantly circulated over all France. "The most democratic constitution that ever existed," said Robespierre, "has issued from the bosom of an Assembly composed of counter-revolutionists, now purged of its unworthy members."[1]

[1 Th. v. 59. 60.

But there never was a greater mistake than to imagine, that this constitution, so Republican in form, conferred any real liberties on the people. Its only effect was to concentrate the whole authority of the state in the hands of a few popular leaders.

Vast Powers of the Committee of Public Safety.

Thenceforward, the Committee of Public Safety at Paris exercised, without opposition, all the powers of government; it named and dismissed the generals, the judges, and the juries; appointed the intendants of the provinces; brought forward all public measures in the Convention, and launched its thunder against every opposite faction. By means of its Commissioners it ruled the provinces, generals, and armies, with absolute sway; and soon after, the law of suspected persons placed the personal freedom of every subject at its disposal; the Revolutionary Tribunal rendered it the master of every life; the requisitions and the maximum, of every fortune; the accusations in the Convention, of every member of the legislature.[2]

[2 Mig. ii. 296, 297. Th. v. 93, 94, 95. Lac. ii. 92.

The law of suspected persons, which gave this tremendous power to the Decemvirs, passed on the 17th

September. It declared all persons liable to arrest, who, "either by their conduct, their relations, their conversation, or their writing, have shown themselves the partisans of tyranny or of federation, or the enemies of freedom; all persons who have not discharged their debts to the country; all nobles, the husbands, wives, parents, children, brothers, sisters, or agents of emigrants, who have not incessantly manifested their devotion to the Revolution."[1] Under this law, no person had any chance of safety but in going the utmost length of revolutionary fury.*

Law of Suspected Persons. 17th Sept.

[1] Lac. ii. 92.

* This atrocious law, as explained by a decree of the Municipality of Paris, which was circulated over all France, gave the following definition of suspected persons. 1. All those who, in the assemblies of the people, arrest their enthusiasm by cries, menaces, or crafty discourses. 2. All those who more prudently speak only of the misfortunes of the Republic, and are always ready to spread bad news with an affected air of sorrow. 3. All those who have changed their conduct and language according to the course of events, who were mute on the crimes of the Royalists and Federalists, and loudly exclaim against the slight faults of the Republicans. 4. All those who bewail the situation of the farmers or avaricious merchants who have had their property taken from them by the forced requisitions. 5. Those who with the words Liberty, Country, and Republic, in their mouths, frequent the society of priests, gentlemen, Feuillants, Moderates, or Aristocrats, or take an interest in their sufferings. 6. Those who have not taken an active part in supporting the cause of the people, and excuse themselves for their lukewarmness, by alleging their patriotic gifts or services in the National Guard. 7. Those who testified indifference on the proclamation of the Republican constitution, or have expressed vain fears as to its durability. 8. All those who, if they have done nothing against liberty, have done nothing for it. 9. All who do not attend regularly the meetings of their sections, and allege, as an excuse, that they do not like to speak in public, or that their time is occupied by their private affairs. 10. Those who speak with contempt of the constituted authorities, the ensigns of the law, the popular societies, or the defenders of liberty. 11. Those who have signed any anti-revolutionary petitions, or frequented societies or clubs of the higher classes. 12. All who were partisans of La Fayette, or served under him in the execution of the Champs de Mars.—Under these ample clauses, every one was embraced who was obnoxious to the Revolutionists; and the number of prisoners in Paris alone, was raised

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Formation of Revolutionary Committees over all France.

The revolutionary committees were declared the judges of the persons liable to arrest. Their number augmented with frightful rapidity; Paris had soon forty-eight. Every village throughout the country followed its example. Five hundred thousand persons, drawn from the dregs of society, disposed in these committees of the lives and liberties of every man in France. With generous resolution, some men entered them with the design of arresting their oppression; they were soon expelled to make way for more obedient ministers of the will of the dictators.[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 93.

Their immense numbers and expense.

The number of revolutionary committees which sprung up in every part of the kingdom to carry into execution this terrible law, was almost incredible. Fifty thousand were soon in operation, from Calais to Bayonne. According to the calculations of the Conventionnel Cambon, they cost annually to the nation 591,000,000 of assignats, or above L. 24,000,000 Sterling. Every member of these committees received three francs a-day, and their number was no less than 540,000. In the immense number of the most active and ambitious of the people who were enlisted on the side of the revolutionary government, and personally interested in its preservation, is to be found the real secret of the firm establishment and long continuance of the Reign of Terror.[2]

[2] Chateaub. Etud. Hist. Pref. 97, 98.

The calculations of these inferior agents of cruelty soon outstripped those of their masters. Marat had asserted that 260,000 heads must fall before freedom was secure. The revolutionary committees discovered that 700,000 persons must be sacrificed. The prisons were speedily loaded with victims in every

[3] Th. v. 360, 361.

in a few days from three hundred to three thousand, embracing all that remained of the elegance of the Fauxbourg St Germains.[3]

town in France; a more speedy mode of disposing of them was proposed than the massacre of 2d September. "Let them quake in their cells," said Collot d'Herbois in the Convention; "let the base traitors tremble at the successes of our enemies; let a mine be dug under the prisons, and at the approach of those whom they call their liberators, let a spark blow them into the air." The retreat of the Allied Armies rendered unnecessary the inhuman proposal at that moment; and famine, pestilence, and the guillotine, soon made its renewal superfluous.[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 93, 94.

This terrible power was everywhere based upon the co-operation of the multitude. That formidable body generally aided in extending the Reign of Terror; in the clubs, by incessant denunciations of the opulent or respectable classes; in the committees, by multiplying the number of vindictive committals. They supported the sword of the Decemvirs, because it fell upon the class above themselves, and opened to the indigent the wealth and the employments of the better ranks in the state: because it flattered them by the possession of power which they were wholly disqualified to exercise, and ruined the higher ranks whom they had been taught to regard as their natural enemies.[2]

[2] Mig. ii. 297.

These revolutionary measures were executed over the whole extent of France with the last severity. Conceived by the most ardent minds, they were violent in their principles; carried into effect far from the leaders who framed them, they were rendered still more oppressive by the brutal character of the agents to whom their execution was intrusted. Part of the citizens were compelled to quit their homes; another was immured in dungeons as suspected; the barnyards of the farmers, the warehouses of the merchants,

CHAP. X. 1793. the shops of the tradesmen, were forcibly emptied for the use of the armies or the government, and nothing but an elusory paper given in exchange. The forced loans were exacted with the utmost rigour; the commissioners said to one, "You are worth 10,000 livres a-year;" to another, "You have 20,000;" and, to save their heads from the guillotine, they were happy to surrender their property to the demands.[1]

[1] Th. v. 353.

No better picture can be desired of the tyranny of these despotic commissioners, than is furnished by the report of one of their members to the Convention. "Everywhere," said Laplanche, who had been sent to the department of Cher, "I have made terror the order of the day; everywhere I have imposed heavy contributions on the rich and the aristocrats. From Orleans I have extracted fifty thousand francs; and in two days, at Bourges, I raised two millions; where I could not appear in person, my delegates have amply supplied my place. I have dismissed all the federalists, imprisoned all the suspected, put all the Sans Culottes in authority. I have forcibly married all the priests, everywhere electrified the hearts and inflamed the courage of the people. I have passed in review numerous battalions of the National Guard, to confirm their republican spirit, and guillotined numbers of Royalists. In a word, I have completely fulfilled my imperial mandate, and acted everywhere as a warm partisan of the Mountain, and faithful representative of the Revolution."[2]

[2] Th. v. 354.

New era established. Sunday abolished.

To obliterate as far as possible all former recollections, a new era was established; they changed the divisions of the year, the names of months and days. The ancient and venerable institution of Sunday was abolished; the period of rest fixed at every tenth day; time was measured by divisions of ten days; and the

year was divided into twelve equal months, beginning on the 22d September. These changes were preparatory to a general abolition of the Christian religion, and substitution of the worship of Reason in its stead.[1] CHAP. X. 1793.

[1] Mig. ii. 298.

Meanwhile, the prisons of Paris exhibited the most extraordinary spectacle. Filled at once with ordinary malefactors, and all that yet remained of dignity, beauty, or virtue in the Republic, they presented the most unparalleled assemblage that modern Europe had yet seen of unblushing guilt and unbending virtue, of dignified manners and revolutionary vulgarity, of splendid talent and frightful atrocity. In some, where the rich were allowed to provide for their own comforts, a singular degree of affluence and even elegance for some time prevailed; in others, the most noble captives were weeping on a couch of straw, with no other covering than a few filthy rags. The French character, imbued beyond any other in Europe with elasticity, and capability to endure misfortunes, in many instances rose superior to all the horrors with which the jails were surrounded. From the multitude and lustre of their fellow-sufferers, every one felt his own calamities sensibly softened. By degrees the ordinary interests of life began to exert their influence even on the verge of the tomb; poetry enchanted the crowded cells by touching strains, eloquence exerted its fascinating ascendant, beauty renewed its silken chains. The female captives of rank became attentive to their dress, intimacies and attachments were formed, and, amidst all the agitation and agony consequent on their protracted sufferings, the excitements of a happier existence were felt even to the foot of the scaffold. By degrees, as the prosecutions became more frequent, and numbers were daily

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led out to execution, the sense of common danger united them in the bonds of the strongest affection; they rejoiced and wept together; and the constant thinning of their number produced a sympathy among the survivors, which outlived every other feeling of existence.[1]

[1] Th. v. 362, 363, 364. Riouffe, 46, 51, 60, 68.

Charlotte Corday. Her character.

While these events were in progress, the arm of female enthusiasm arrested the course of one of the tyrants. Charlotte Corday, a native of Rouen, at the age of five-and-twenty, was animated by a heroism and devotion above her sex. Gifted with a beautiful form and a serene temper, she deemed the occupations and ordinary ambition of women beneath her serious regard; possessed of more than masculine courage, she had lost nothing of female delicacy. One only passion, the love of liberty, concentrated the ardent aspirations of her mind. Her enthusiasm was awakened to the highest degree by the arrival of the proscribed Girondists at Rouen; all the romantic visions of her youth seemed blighted by the bloody usurpations of the ruling faction at Paris. Marat, the instigator of all the atrocities, she imagined to be their leader. If he could be removed, no obstacle appeared to remain to the reign of Justice and Equality, to the commencement of the happiness of France. In the heroic spirit of female devotion, she resolved to sacrifice her life to attain this inestimable object.[2]

[2] Lac. ii. 80. Th. v. 77, 78.

She resolves to assassinate Marat.

Having taken her resolution, she regained all her wonted cheerfulness of manner, which the public calamities had much impaired. Deceived by the appearance of joy which she exhibited, her relations allowed her to set off on some trifling commissions to Paris. In the public conveyance she was chiefly distinguished by the amiable playfulness of her demeanour, uninterrupted even by the savage conversation of some

Jacobins who were present. The first day of her arrival at Paris was employed in executing her commissions; on the second, she purchased a knife at the Palais Royal, to plunge into the bosom of the tyrant. On the third day, she with difficulty obtained an entrance to Marat. She found him in the bath, where he eagerly enquired after the proscribed deputies at Caen. Being told their names, "They shall soon meet with the punishment they deserve," said Marat. "Yours is at hand!" exclaimed she, and stabbed him to the heart. He uttered a loud shriek and expired. Charlotte Corday remained motionless in the apartment, and was seized and conducted to prison.[1]

Kills him.

[1] Lac. ii. 80, 81. Mig. ii. 279. Th. v. 80, 81.

On the day of her trial she interrupted the prosecutors, who were beginning to prove the death of the deceased.—"These formalities are unnecessary—I killed Marat!"—"What tempted you to commit the murder?"—"His own crimes."—"What do you mean by his crimes?"—"The misfortunes which he has inflicted on France since the Revolution, and which he was preparing to increase."—"Who are your associates?"—"I have none; I alone conceived the idea."—"What did you propose to yourself by putting Marat to death?"—"To stop the anarchy of France. I have slain one man to save an hundred thousand; a wretch, to preserve the innocent; a savage monster, to give repose to my country. I was a Republican before the Revolution, and I have never failed in energy."—"What do you understand by energy?" asked the president. "The sentiment which animates those who, disdaining the consideration of their own safety, sacrifice themselves for the sake of their country." Upon hearing her sentence, she gave a joyful exclamation, and, with a radiant countenance, handed to the president two letters, one addressed to

Her Trial and Death.

CHAP. X. 1793. Barbaroux, the other to her father. In the latter, she said, "Pardon me, my dear father, for having disposed of my life without your permission. I have avenged many victims, prevented others. The people will one day acknowledge the service I have rendered my country. For your sake I wished to remain *incognito*, but it was impossible; I only trust you will not be injured by what I have done. Farewell, my beloved father; forget me, or rather rejoice at my fate; it has sprung from a noble cause. Embrace my sister for me, whom I love with all my heart, as well as all my relations. Never forget the words of Corneille—

"The crime makes the shame, and not the scaffold."

When led out to execution, she gazed with undisturbed serenity on the preparations for her death. Her appearance was that of a lovely female, bearing with meekness and inward satisfaction, a triumphal fête, of which she was the object. The immense multitude seemed to her enfranchised by the sacrifice she had made. When the axe had terminated her life, the executioner seized her head, beautiful even in death, and gave it several buffets; the indignant spectators shuddered at his atrocity.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 279. Th. v. 86, 87. Lac. ii. 82, 83.

Apotheosis of Marat.

The Jacobins attempted to deify Marat: Robespierre pronounced an eloquent eulogium on his virtues in the Convention. "If I speak to-day," said he, "it is because I am bound to do so. Poniards were here used: I should have received the fatal blow: Chance alone made it light on that great patriot. Think no longer, therefore, of vain declamations or the pomp of burial; the best way to avenge Marat is to prosecute his enemies with relentless vigour. The vengeance which is satisfied with funeral honours is soon appeas-

ed, and loses itself in useless projects. Renounce, then, these useless discussions, and avenge him in the only manner worthy of his name." His obsequies were celebrated with extraordinary pomp; a band of young women were invited to throw flowers on the body, and the President of the Popular Societies, who pronounced his funeral oration, said, "Let us not pronounce his eulogy: it is to be found in his conduct, his writings, his ghastly wound, his death. Citizens! Cast your flowers on the pale body of Marat; He was our friend—the friend of the people; it was for the people that he lived, for the people that he died. Enough has now been given to lamentation: Listen to the great soul of Marat, which rises from the grave, and says, 'Republicans, put an end to your tears: Republicans should weep but for a moment, and then devote themselves to their country: It was not me whom they wished to assassinate; it was the Republic: It is not I who cry for vengeance; it is the Republic; it is the people; it is yourselves!'" His remains were consigned with funeral pomp to the Pantheon; and his monument raised in every town and village of France.[1] Posterity has reversed the sentence; it has consigned Marat to eternal execration, and associated Charlotte Corday with Timoleon and Brutus.

[1] Mig. ii. 279. Lac. ii. 83. Th. v. 88—91.

Arrest of seventy-three Members of the Convention.

Robespierre and the Decemvirs made the assassination of Marat the ground for increased severity towards the broken remains of the Girondist party. Many of their friends remained in the Convention; with generous constancy they still sat on the benches to the right, thinned by the proscription of so many noble members. During the trial of Charlotte Corday, a secret protest, signed by seventy-three deputies, against the usurpation of 2d June, was discovered;[2] they were all immediately arrested, and thrown into

[2] Lac. ii. 84. Toul. iv. 279.

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prison. The Convention, after their removal, contained no elements even of resistance to the tyrants.

Situation of Marie Antoinette.

Marie Antoinette was the next victim. Since the death of the King, his unfortunate family had been closely confined in the Temple; the Princesses had themselves discharged all the duties of menial servants to the Queen and the Dauphin. A project had been formed, with every appearance of success, for her escape: She at first listened to the proposal, but on the evening before it was to be carried into execution, declared her resolution never to separate from her son. "Whatever pleasure it would give me," said she, "to escape from this place, I cannot consent to be separated from him. I can feel no enjoyment without my children: with them I can regret nothing." Even in the prison of the Temple, the cares of his education were sedulously attended to; and the mind of the young King already imbibed the duties of royalty."[1]

[1] Memoires de la Duchesse d'Angouleme, p. 17. Lac. x. 226. Duch. d'Angouleme, 17.

The Revolution of 31st May was felt in its full severity by the prisoners in the Temple, as well as all the other captives in France. Hebert insisted that the family of the tyrant should not be better treated than that of a family of Sans Culottes; and he obtained a decree from the magistrates, by which every species of luxury was withdrawn. Their fare was reduced to the humblest kind; wicker lamps became their only light, and their dress the coarsest habiliments. He himself soon after visited the Temple, and took from the unhappy prisoners even the little movables on which their only comfort depended. Eighty-four louis, which the Princess Elizabeth had received from the Princess Lamballe, and which she had hitherto concealed, could not elude his rigorous search, and were taken away.[2]

[2] Th. v. 369.

Soon the barbarity of the government envied the

widowed and captive Queen even the pleasure of beholding her son. The discovery of an abortive conspiracy for their liberation, was made the ground for separating the Dauphin from his mother, and delivering him to the inhuman Simon, the agent and friend of Robespierre. In vain the young Prince demanded to see the decree which authorized this cruel separation. His mother, weeping, recommended submission; and he remained two days without taking nourishment, after he was for ever withdrawn from her sight. All the cruel treatment of Simon could not extinguish the native generosity of his disposition. "Capet," said he, "if the Vendéans were to succeed in delivering you, and placing you on the throne, what would you do with me?"—"I would pardon you," replied the infant monarch.[1]

[1] Lac. x. 230, 233. Th. v. 370.

"What am I to do with the child?" said Simon to the Committee of Public Safety: "Banish him?"—"No."—"Kill him?"—"No."—"Poison him?"—"No."—"What then?"—"*Get quit of him.*" These instructions were too faithfully executed. By depriving him of air, exercise, and wholesome food, by keeping him in a continual state of squalid filth, the unfortunate child was at length brought to his grave, without imposing upon his keepers the necessity of actual violence.[2]

Cruel treatment and death of the Dauphin.

[2] Lac. x. 233.

On the 2d August, the Queen was separated from her weeping sister and daughter, and confined alone in the prison of the Conciergerie. A narrow, gloomy, and damp apartment, a worn mattrass, and a bed of straw, constituted the sole accommodations of one, for whom the splendour of Versailles once seemed hardly adequate. She was kept there above two months in the closest confinement; her mild and heroic demeanour interested even the wife of the jailor in her be-

Aug. 2.

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half. Madame de Staël published a pamphlet, in which, with generous eloquence, she urged the impolicy as well as injustice of farther severity against the royal family. "Women of France," she concluded, "I appeal to you: your empire is over, if ferocity continues to reign: your destinies are gone, if your tears fall in vain. Defend then the Queen, by the arms which Nature has given you: Seek the infant, who will perish if bereaved of his mother, and must become the object of painful interest, from the unheard-of calamities which have befallen him. Let him ask on his knees the life of his mother: childhood can pray; it can pray, when as yet it knows not the calamity which it would avert." But her efforts were in vain. On the 14th October, the Queen was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal.[1]

[1] De Stael, Reflections sur le Proces de la Reine. Œuvres, xvi. 32. Lac. x. 239, 241, 249.

Trial of the Queen. Oct. 14.

An immense crowd assembled to witness her trial, The spectacle of a QUEEN being tried by her subjects, was as yet new in the history of the world; the populace, how much soever accustomed to sanguinary scenes, were strongly excited by this event. Sorrow and confinement had whitened her once beautiful hair; her figure and air still commanded the admiration of all who beheld her; her cheeks, pale and emaciated, were occasionally tinged with a vivid colour, at the mention of those she had lost. Out of deference to her husband's memory, rather than her own inclination, she pleaded to the Court. Their interrogatories were of no avail; her answers, like those of the King, were clear, distinct, and unequivocal.[2]

[2] Lac. x. 250, 251. Th. v. 374.

As the form of examining witnesses was necessary, the prosecutors called the Count d'Estaing, who commanded the military at Versailles on the 5th October, 1789; but though the Queen had been his political opponent, he had too high a sense of honour to tell

anything but the truth, and spoke only of her heroism on that trying occasion, and her noble resolution expressed in his presence to die with her husband, rather than obtain life by leaving him. Manuel, notwithstanding his hostility to the Court during the Legislative Assembly, declared he could not depone to one fact against the accused. The venerable Bailly was next brought in; he now beheld the fruits of his democratic enthusiasm, and wept when he saw the Queen. When asked if he knew "the woman Capet," he turned with a melancholy air to his Sovereign, and, profoundly bowing his head, said, "Yes, I know *Madame*." He then declared that he could say nothing against her, and that all the pretended accounts extracted from the young Prince, relative to the journey to Varennes, were false. The Jacobins were furious at his testimony, and, from the violence of their language, he easily anticipated the fate which they reserved for himself. Recourse was then had to the testimony of other witnesses; the monsters Hebert and Simon were examined, and deponed that the Dauphin had informed them that he had been initiated into improper practices by his mother; the Queen, overwhelmed with horror at the atrocious falsehood, remained silent. A juryman having insisted that she should answer,—"If I have not hitherto spoken," said she, "it is because nature refused to answer to such an accusation, brought against a mother." Turning to the audience, with inexpressible dignity, she added, "I appeal to all the mothers who hear me, whether such a thing is possible." It was of no avail; notwithstanding the eloquent and courageous defence of her counsel, she was condemned.[1]

[1] Lac. x. 254. Th. v. 374, 375.

At four in the morning of the day of her execution, she wrote a letter to the Princess Elizabeth, worthy

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Her heroic conduct and execution.

to be placed beside the testament of Louis. "To you, my sister," said she, "I address myself for the last time. I have been condemned, not to an ignominious death; it is so only to the guilty; but to rejoin your brother. Innocent like him, I hope to emulate his firmness at the last hour. I weep only for my children: I hope that one day, when they have regained their rank, they may be reunited to you, and feel the blessing of your tender care. Let them ever recollect what I have never ceased to inculcate, that a scrupulous discharge of duty is the only foundation of a good life; friendship and mutual confidence its best consolation. May my son never forget the last words of his father, which I now repeat from myself: *Never to attempt to revenge our death.* I die true to the Catholic religion; the faith of my fathers, which I have never ceased to profess: Deprived of all spiritual consolation, I can only seek for pardon from Heaven. I ask forgiveness of all who know me; from you in an especial manner, my sister, for all the pain I may have involuntarily given you: I pray for forgiveness to all my enemies." [1]

[1] Lac. x. 259.

October 16.

When led out for execution, she was dressed in white: She had cut off her hair with her own hands. Placed in a hurdle, with her arms tied behind her back, she was conducted by a long circuit to the place of execution, which was on the Place of the Revolution,* where her husband had perished. The people, roused by Revolutionary emissaries, raised savage shouts of joy as she moved along; the Queen, with a serene look, indicating pity rather than suffering, bore that last expression of popular fury. When the procession reached the fatal place, she ascended with a firm step the scaffold;[2] her countenance was illumi-

[2] Lac. x. 261. Toul. iv. 107. Th. v. 337.

* Now the Place Louis XV.

nated by an expression of Christian hope; and the daughter of the Cæsars died with a firmness that did honour to her race. CHAP. X. 1793.

Thus perished, at the age of thirty-nine, Marie Antoinette, Queen of France. Called in early life to the first throne in Europe, surrounded by a splendid court and a flattering nobility, blessed with an affectionate husband and promising family, she seemed to have approached, as nearly as the uncertainty of life will admit, to the limits of human felicity. She died, after years of suffering and anguish, broken by captivity, subdued by misfortune, bereft of her children, degraded from her throne, on the scaffold, where she had recently before seen her husband perish. History has not recorded a more terrible instance of reverse of fortune, or more illustrative of the wisdom of the ancient saying, "that none should be pronounced happy till the day of their death." [1] Her character. [1] Plutarch in Solon.

Her character has come comparatively pure and unsullied out of the revolutionary furnace. An affectionate daughter and a faithful wife, she preserved in the two most corrupted courts of Europe the simplicity and affections of domestic life. If in early youth her indiscretion and familiarity were such as prudence would condemn, in later years her spirit and magnanimity were such as justice must admire. She was more fitted for the storms of adversity than the sunshine of prosperity. Ambitious and overbearing in the earlier years of her reign: it was the sufferings of her later days that drew forth the nobler parts of her character. The worthy descendant of Maria Theresa, she would have died in the field combating her enemies, rather than live on the throne, subject to their control. Years of misfortune quenched her spirit, but did not lessen her courage; in the solitude of the Temple, she discharged,

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with exemplary fidelity, every duty to her husband and her children, and bore a reverse of fortune, unparalleled even in that age of calamity, with a heroism that never was surpassed.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 108, 109.

Her marriage to Louis was considered at the time as a masterstroke in politics. A long alliance between the rival monarchies was anticipated from the propitious union, which seemed to unite their destinies. It led to a war more terrible than any which had yet shaken these powers; to the repeated capture of both capitals by hostile armies; to mutual exasperation unprecedented between their people. So uncertain are the conclusions of political wisdom, when founded on personal interests or connections, and not on the great and permanent principles which govern human affairs. The manners of the Queen accelerated the Revolution: her foreign descent exasperated the public discontent; her undeserved death was one means of bringing about its punishment. Slow, but sure, came the hour of Germany's revenge. On that day twenty years from which she ascended the scaffold, commenced the fatal rout of France on the field of Leipsic.[2]

[2] On Oct. 16, 1813. She died Oct. 16, 1793.

Violation of the Tombs of St Denis.

The execution of the Queen was an act of defiance by the National Convention to all the crowned heads in Europe. It was immediately followed by a measure as unnecessary as it was barbarous,—the violation of the tombs of St Denis, and the profanation of the sepulchres of the kings of France. By a decree of the Convention, these venerable asylums of departed greatness were ordered to be destroyed,—a measure never adopted by the English Parliament even during the frenzy of the Covenant; and which proves, that political fanaticism will push men to greater extremities than religious. A furious multitude preci-

pitated itself out of Paris; the tombs of Henry IV., of Francis I., and of Louis XII., were ransacked, and their bones scattered in the air. Even the glorious name of Turenne could not protect his grave from spoliation. His remains were almost undecayed, as when he received the fatal wound on the banks of the Lech. The bones of Charles V., the saviour of his country, were dispersed. At his feet was found the coffin of the faithful Du Guesclin, and French hands profaned the skeleton before which English invasion had rolled back. Most of these tombs were found to be strongly secured. Much time, and no small exertion of skill and labour, was required to burst their barriers. They would have resisted for ever the decay of time, or the violence of enemies; they yielded to the fury of domestic dissension.[1]

[1] Chateaub. Etud. Hist. iv. 169. Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 142. and Hist. x. 265.

This was immediately followed by a general attack upon the monuments and remains of antiquity throughout all France. The sepulchres of the great of past times, of the Barons and Generals of the feudal ages, of the Paladins, and of the Crusaders, were involved in one undistinguished ruin. It seemed as if the glories of antiquity were forgotten, or sought to be buried in oblivion. The tomb of Du Guesclin shared the same fate as that of Louis XIV. The skulls of monarchs and heroes were tossed about like foot-balls by the profane multitude; like the grave-diggers in Hamlet, they made a jest of the lips before which nations had trembled.[2]

Destruction of Monuments over all France.

[2] Lac. x. 264, 265.

The monumental remains, which had escaped their sacrilegious fury, were subsequently collected by order of the Directory, and placed in a great museum at Paris, where they long remained piled and heaped together in broken confusion,—an emblem of the Re-

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volution, which destroyed in a few years what centuries of glory had erected.

Abjuration of Christianity by the Municipality.

Having massacred the great of the present, and insulted the illustrious of former ages, nothing remained to the Revolutionists but to direct their vengeance against Heaven itself. Paché, Hebert, and Chaumette, the leaders of the Municipality, publicly expressed their determination "to dethrone the King of Heaven, as well as the monarchs of the earth." To accomplish this design, they prevailed on Gobet, the apostate Constitutional Bishop of Paris, to appear at the bar of the Assembly, accompanied by some of the clergy of his diocese, and there abjure the Christian faith. He declared, "that no other national religion was now required but that of liberty, equality, and morality." Many of the Constitutional Bishops and clergy in the Convention joined in the proposition. Crowds of drunken artisans and shameless prostitutes crowded to the bar, and trampled under their feet the sacred vases, consecrated for ages to the holiest purposes of religion. The sections of Paris shortly after followed the example of the Constitutional clergy, and publicly abjured the Christian religion. The churches were stript of all their ornaments; their plate and valuable contents brought in heaps to the Municipality and the Convention, from whence they were sent to the Mint to be melted down. Trampling under foot the images of Our Saviour and the Virgin, they elevated, amidst shouts of applause, the busts of Marat and Lepelletier, and danced round them, singing parodies on the Hallelujah, and dancing the Carmagnole.[1]

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[1] Th. v. 429, 430. Lac. x. 300, 302. Toul iv. 124. Nov. 10.

Shortly after, a still more indecent exhibition took place before the Assembly. The celebrated prophecy of Father Beauregard was accomplished,—"Beauty

without modesty was seen usurping the place of the Holy of Holies!" Hebert, Chaumette, and their associates, appeared at the bar, and declared that "God did not exist, and that the worship of Reason was to be substituted in His stead." A veiled female, arrayed in blue drapery, was brought into the Assembly; and Chaumette, taking her by the hand, "Mortals," said he, "cease to tremble before the powerless thunders of a God, whom your fears have created. Henceforth acknowledge no divinity but Reason. I offer you its noblest and purest image; if you must have idols, sacrifice only to such as this."—When, letting fall the veil, he exclaimed, "Fall before the august Senate of Freedom, oh! Veil of Reason!" At the same time, the goddess appeared personified by a celebrated beauty, the wife of Momoro, a printer, known in more than one character to most of the Convention. The goddess, after being embraced by the president, was mounted on a magnificent car, and conducted, amidst an immense crowd, to the cathedral of Notre Dame, to take the place of the Deity. There she was elevated on the high altar, and received the adoration of all present, while the young women, her attendants, whose alluring looks already sufficiently indicated their profession, retired into the chapels round the choir, where every species of licentiousness and obscenity was indulged in without control, with hardly any veil from the public gaze. To such a length was this carried, that Robespierre afterwards declared that Chaumette deserved death for the abominations he had permitted on that occasion. Thenceforward that ancient edifice was called the *Temple of Reason.*[1]

The Goddess of Reason introduced into the Convention.

The services of religion were now universally abandoned; the pulpits were deserted throughout all the

[1] Hist. de la Conv. iii. 192–196. Lac. x. 307, 308. Toul. iv. 124. Th. v. 431, 432. Mig. ii. 299.

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revolutionized districts; baptisms ceased; the burial service was no longer heard; the sick received no communion; the dying no consolation. A heavier anathema than that of Papal power pressed upon the peopled realm of France; the anathema of Heaven, inflicted by the madness of her own inhabitants. The village bells were silent; Sunday was obliterated. Infancy entered the world without a blessing; age left it without a hope. In lieu of the services of the church, the licentious fêtes of the new worship were performed by the most abandoned females; it appeared as if the Christian truth had been succeeded by the orgies of the Babylonian priests, or the grossness of the Hindoo theocracy. On every tenth day a Revolutionary leader ascended the pulpit, and preached atheism to the bewildered audience; Marat was universally deified, and even the instrument of death sanctified by the name of the "Holy Guillotine."[o] On all the public cemeteries the inscription was placed, "Death is an Eternal Sleep." The comedian Monort, in the church of St Roch, carried impiety to its utmost length. "God! if you exist," said he, "avenge your injured name. *I bid you defiance;* you remain silent; you dare not launch your thunders; who after this will believe in your existence?" It is by slower means, and the operation of general laws, that the destinies of Providence are accomplished. A more convincing proof of divine government than the destruction of the blasphemer was about to be afforded; the annihilation of the guilty by their own hands, and the consequence of the passions which they themselves had unchained; the voluntary return of a rebellious people to the faith of their fathers, from the experienced impossibility of living without its precepts.[l]

Universal abandonment of Religion, and closing of the Church.

[l] Lac. x. 308, 309, 331. Toul. iv. 124. Mig. ii. 299.

After an interval of seven years, the worship of Christianity was restored by Napoleon, with the general approbation of the French people. But a ruinous effect was produced by this long cessation of its services; a great portion of the youth of France, now occupying the most important situations in the country, were brought up without receiving any religious impressions in early life. This evil is still severely felt; its consequences are irremediable; it has for ever disqualified the French from the enjoyment of freedom, because it has extinguished the feelings of duty, on which alone it can be founded in the young and influential part of the people.

General and excessive dissolution of Manners.

The most sacred relations of life were at the same period placed on a new footing, suited to the extravagant ideas of the times. Marriage was declared a civil contract, binding only during the pleasure of the contracting parties. Divorce immediately became general; the corruption of manners reached a pitch unknown during the worst days of the monarchy; the vices of the marquisses and countesses of Louis XV. descended to the shopkeepers and artisans of Paris. So indiscriminate did concubinage become, that, by a decree of the Convention, bastards were declared entitled to an equal share of the succession with legitimate children. Mademoiselle Arnout, a celebrated comedian, expressed the public feeling when she called "*Marriage the Sacrament of Adultery.*" The divorces in Paris in the first three months of 1793 were 562, while the marriages were only 1785; a proportion probably unexampled among mankind. The consequences soon became apparent. Before the era of the Consulate, one-half of the whole births in Paris were illegitimate; and at this moment, notwithstanding the apparent reformation of manners which

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has taken place since the Restoration, the dissolution of manners is extreme.[1]

[1] Dupin, i. 79. Lac. x. 332, 333. Burke, viii. 176. Reg. Peace.

A decree of the Convention suppressed all the academies, public schools, and colleges, even those of medicine and surgery; their whole revenues were confiscated. New schools, on a plan traced out by Condorcet, were directed; but no efficient steps were taken to ensure their establishment, and education for a number of years ceased through all France. One establishment only, that of the Polytechnic School, takes its date from this melancholy epoch. During the long night, the whole force of the human mind was bent upon the mathematical sciences, which flourished from the concentration of its powers, and were soon illuminated by the most splendid light.[2]

[2] Lac. x. 321, 322.

Confiscation of the property of Hospitals and the Poor.

In the general havoc, even the establishments of charity were not overlooked. The revenues of the hospitals and humane institutions throughout France were confiscated by the despots whom the people had seated on the throne; their domains sold as part of the national property. Soon the terrible effects of the suppression of all permanent sources of relief to the destitute became apparent; mendicity advanced with frightful steps; and the condition of the poor throughout France became such as to call forth the loudest lamentations from the few enlightened philanthropists who still followed the car of the Revolution.[3]

[3] Report sur la Mendicité, par Liancourt, ii. 20. Lac. x. 333.

Arrest and death of Bailly. Nov. 11.

The Decemvirs next proceeded to destroy their former friends, and the earliest supporters of the Revolution. Bailly, Mayor of Paris, and President of the Assembly, on occasion of the celebrated Jeu de Paume, was arrested and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. His profound and eloquent scientific researches, his great services in the cause of liberty, his enlightened philanthropy, pleaded in vain before that

sanguinary court. The recollection of the Champs de Mars, of the red flag, and the courageous stand which he had made with La Fayette against the fury of the multitude, was present to the minds of his prosecutors. The witnesses adduced spoke against him with an unusual degree of asperity. He was condemned to die, and in his case, as he had foreseen, a refinement of cruelty was exerted. The Champs de Mars was selected as the place of his execution; an immense crowd of vindictive Jacobins, among whom were a large proportion of women, and persons whom he had saved from famine during his mayoralty, assembled to witness his death; on foot, in the most dreadful weather, the unhappy victim was led behind the guillotine during a tedious passage of two hours, from the Champs de Mars, to which he was first brought, to the place finally fixed on for his execution opposite Challlot. During this passage he frequently fell; he was assailed with hisses and pelted with mud; and the first President of the Assembly received several inhuman blows from the populace. At the Champs de Mars, the red flag, emblematic of the martial law which he had authorized, was burnt over his head, and Bailly was led again on foot, amidst a drenching fall of snow and sleet, to the banks of the river, where he was executed. "You tremble, Bailly," said one of the spectators. "My friend," said the old man, "it is only from cold."[1]

[1] Lac x.292. Th. x. 294, 396, 397. Toul. iv. 130.

The eloquent Barnave, one of the most upright members of the Constituent Assembly, was soon after condemned, notwithstanding a defence by himself of unrivalled pathos and ability. Duport Dutertre, formerly minister of Louis XVI. on the same day shared the same fate. Condorcet had fled when the lists of proscription were first prepared by the victors

Of Barnave and Condorcet.

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on the 2d June; for eight months he was concealed in Paris, and employed the tedious hours of solitude in composing his celebrated "Esquisse des Progrès de l'Esprit-Humain," a work in which much learning is illustrated by fervid eloquence; and the warm but visionary anticipations of future improvement were indulged, amidst the deepest circumstances of present disaster. In gratitude to the hostess who had sheltered him, he wrote a poem, containing a sentiment descriptive of the feelings of his party during those melancholy times,—

"Choisi d'etre oppresseur ou la victime,
J'embrassai le malheur et leur laissai le crime."

Terrified by the numerous lists of persons condemned for concealing the proscribed, he declared to his generous protector the resolution to leave her. "I must not remain any longer with you; I am *hors la loi*."—"But we," replied she, "are not *hors de l'humanité*." He set out, nevertheless, disguised as a common labourer; at the village of Clamart, the fineness of his linen awakened the suspicion of his landlady, who had him arrested and sent to prison, where next morning he was found dead from the effects of a speedy poison, which, like many others in those days of terror, he constantly carried about his person.[1]

[1] Th. x. 286, 287.

And Custine.

General Custine, who commanded the army of Flanders, at the time of the capture of Valenciennes by the English, was denounced by the agents of the Convention, and shortly after brought to the Revolutionary Tribunal. His beautiful and gifted daughter-in-law in vain sat daily by his side, and exerted herself to the utmost in his behalf; in vain General Baraguay d'Hilliers, with generous courage, supported him by his military knowledge and experience.

Her grace, and the obvious injustice of the accusation, produced some impression on the judges; and a few inclined to an acquittal; immediately the Revolutionary Tribunal itself was complained of at the Jacobin club. "It gives me great pain," said Hebert, at that great centre of the Revolution, "to be obliged to denounce an authority which was the hope of the patriots, and hitherto has so well deserved their confidence. But the Revolutionary Tribunal is on the point of absolving a guilty person, in favour of whom the beauties of Paris are moving heaven and earth. The daughter of Custine, as skilful an actress in this city as her father was at the head of the armies, solicits every one in his behalf." Robespierre made some cutting remarks on the spirit of chicanery and form, which had taken possession of the Tribunal, and strongly supported his guilt. The consequences were decisive; he was found guilty, and condemned amidst the rapturous applause of the Jacobins and Cordeliers who filled the court. He was sent to the scaffold, and, though shaken for a moment, died firmly. The crowd murmured because he appeared on the fatal chariot with a minister of religion by his side. General Houchard, the second in command, who had denounced Custine, notwithstanding his recent success over the Allies at Hoondschote, shortly after shared the same fate; and Baraguay d'Hilliers, reserved for higher destinies, was sent to prison, from whence he was only delivered by the fall of Robespierre.[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 296, 297. Th. v. 297. 299. Toul. iv. 62. 131. Th. x. 297.

Trial and Execution of the Duke of Orleans.

The Duke of Orleans, the early and interested instigator of the Revolution, was its next victim. Robespierre, at the hall of the Jacobins, had already pronounced his doom; the Assembly, once his hireling adulators, unanimously supported the proposal.

CHAP. X. 1793. In vain he alleged his accession to the disorders of 5th October, his support of the Revolt of August 10, his vote against the King on January 17; his condemnation speedily was pronounced. He demanded only one favour, which was granted, that his execution should be postponed for twenty-four hours. In the interval, he had a repast prepared with care, on which he feasted with more than usual avidity; when led out to execution, he gazed for a time, with a smile on his countenance, on the Palais Royal, the scene of his former orgies. He was detained above a quarter of an hour in front of that palace by order of Robespierre, who had in vain asked his daughter's hand in marriage, and had promised, if he would relent in that extremity, to excite a tumult which should save his life. Depraved as he was, he had too much honourable feeling left to consent to such a sacrifice, and remained in expectation of death, without giving the expected signal of acquiescence for twenty minutes, when he was permitted to continue his journey to the scaffold. He met his fate with stoical fortitude; and it is pleasing to have to record one redeeming trait at the close of a life stained by so much selfish passion and guilty ambition,—he preferred death to sacrificing his daughter to the tyrant. Never was more strongly exemplified the effect of materialism and infidelity, in rendering men callous to futurity, and degrading a naturally noble disposition. The multitude applauded his execution; not a voice was raised in his favour, though it was mainly composed of the very men who had been instigated by his adulators, and fed by his extravagance.[1]

[1] Hist. de la Conv. iii. 180. Lac. xi. 289, 290. Toul. iv. 121, 122.

The destruction of Bailly, Custine, and the Duke of Orleans, annihilated the party attached to a constitutional monarchy. The early objects of the Re-

volution were thus frustrated, its first supporters destroyed by the passions they had awakened among the people. The overthrow of the Gironde extinguished the hope of a Republic; the massacre of the Constitutionalists, that of a limited monarchy. The prophecy of Vergniaud was rapidly approaching its accomplishment; the Revolution, like Saturn, was successively devouring all its progeny.

Two parties, however, still remained opposed on different principles to the Decemvirs, and whose destruction was indispensable to their despotic authority. These parties were the Moderate and the Anarchists. At the head of the former were Danton and Camille Desmoulins; the latter was supported by the powerful Municipality of Paris.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 300.

Estrangement of the Dantonists and Ruling Power.

It has been already observed, that Danton and his party were strangers to the real objects of the Revolt on May 31. They aided the populace in the struggle with the Convention; but they had no intention of establishing the oligarchy, which directed, and finally triumphed by their exertions. After the overthrow of the Assembly, Robespierre urged Danton to retire to the country. "A tempest is arising," said he; "the Jacobins have not forgot your relations with Dumourier. They hate your manners; your voluptuous and indolent habits are at variance with their energy. Withdraw for a moment; trust to a friend, who will watch over your dangers, and warn you of the first moment to return." Danton followed his advice, nothing loath to get quit of a faction, of which he began to dread the excesses; and his party were entirely excluded from the Dictatorial government.[2]

[2] Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 91. Mig. ii. 301.

The leaders of this party were Danton, Philippeaux, Camille Desmoulins, Fabre d'Eglantine, and

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Westermann, the tried leader of August 10. Their principles were, that terror was to be used only for the establishment of freedom, not made an instrument of oppression in the hands of those who had gained it; they wished, above all things, that the Republicans should remain masters of the field of battle, but having done so, use their victory with moderation. In pursuance of these principles, they reprobated the violent proceedings of the Dictators after the victory of 31st May had ensured the triumph of the populace; desired to humble the Anarchists of the Municipality, to put an end to the Revolutionary Tribunal, discharge from confinement those imprisoned as suspected persons, and dissolve the despotic Committees of government.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 6, 7. Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 91. Mig. ii. 301.

The other party, that of the Municipality, carried their ambition and extravagance even beyond the Decemvirs. Instead of government, they professed a desire to establish an extreme local democracy; instead of religion, the consecration of materialism. As usual, in democratic contests, they carried their revolutionary principles beyond the dominant faction, and strove thus to supplant them in the affections of the populace. They had witnessed with extreme dissatisfaction, the Committees usurp all the powers of government after the Revolt of 31st May, and thus reap for themselves all the fruits of the victory which their forces had mainly contributed to achieve. In cruelty, obscenity, and atheism, they exceeded the Dictatorial Government; but these were only means to an end; in the passion for tyrannical power, they yielded to none, provided only it was wielded by themselves.[2]

[2] Th. ii. 298. Mig. ii. 298. Toul. vi. 286.

These two parties, as usual in civil dissensions, mutually reproached each other with the public calamities. The Anarchists incessantly charged the Mode-

rates with corruption, and being the secret agents of foreign courts. "It is you," replied the Dantonists, "who are the real accomplices of the stranger; every thing draws you towards them, both the common violence of your language, and the joint design to overturn every thing in France. Behold the Magistracy, which arrogates to itself more than legislative authority; which regulates every thing, police, subsistence, worship; which has substituted a new religion for the old one; replaced one superstition by another still more absurd; which openly preaches atheism, and causes itself to be imitated by all the Municipalities in France. Consider those war-offices, from whence so many extortioners issue, who carry desolation into the provinces, and discredit the Revolution by their conduct. Observe the Municipality and the Committees—what do they propose to themselves, if it is not to usurp the Executive and Legislative authority, to dispossess the Convention, and dissolve the government? Who could suggest such a design, but the external enemies of France!"[1]

[1] Th. vi. 10, 11.

Publication of the Vieux Cordelier.

Camille Desmoulins, in a celebrated pamphlet, entitled, "Le Vieux Cordelier," drew, under a professed description of Rome under the Emperors, a striking picture of the horrors of that gloomy period. "Every thing," said he, "under that terrible government, was made the groundwork of suspicion. Has a citizen popularity. He is a rival of the Dictator, who might create disturbances. Does he avoid society, and live retired by his fireside. That is to ruminate in private on sinister designs. Is he rich. That renders the danger the greater, that he will corrupt the citizens by his largesses. Is he poor. None so dangerous as those who have nothing to lose. Is he thoughtful and melancholy. He is revolving what he calls

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the calamities of his country. Is he gay and dissipated. He is concealing, like Cæsar, ambition under the mask of pleasure. Is he virtuous and austere. He has constituted himself the censor of the government. Is he a philosopher, an orator, and a poet. He will soon acquire more consideration than the rulers of the state. Has he acquired reputation in war. His talents only render him the more formidable, and make it indispensable to get quit of his authority. The natural death of a celebrated man is become so rare, that historians transmit it as a matter worthy of record to future ages. Even the death of so many great and good citizens seems a less calamity than the insolence and scandalous fortune of their denouncers. Every day the accuser makes his triumphal entry into the palace of death, and reaps the rich harvest which is presented to his hands. The Tribunals, once the protectors of life and property, have become the organs of butchery, where robbery and murder have usurped the names of confiscation and punishment."[1] Such is the picture drawn of the effect of popular government by the man who was called the first apostle of liberty! And how striking the coincidence, that in drawing with the pencil of Tacitus a picture of Roman servitude under Nero and Caligula, he was exhibiting a portrait which none could fail to recognise of France, under the government which his own democratic transports had contributed to impose upon its inhabitants.

[1] Vieux Cordelier, Rev. Mem. xlii. p. 50, 51, 53.

Efforts of Danton to detach Robespierre from the Municipality.

Danton and his friends made the greatest efforts to detach Robespierre from the sanguinary faction with whom he acted, and at first with some appearance of success. He had taken some steps towards a moderate government; in the Convention, he had publicly stopped the trial of the seventy-three depu-

ties, who were detained in prison, in consequence of having protested against the arrest of the Girondists. He had reprobated the ultra-revolutionary measures of Hebert and the Municipality, and brought-about a decree of the Convention, recognising the existence of the Supreme Being. He had not only read, but corrected the proof-sheets of the "Vieux Cordelier," where he was adjured in the most touching language to embrace the sentiments of humanity. Already his popularity, in consequence, was on the wane. He was accused of *Moderatism*, and the groups of the Jacobins began to murmur at his proceedings.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 305, 307. Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 136, 138. Vieux Cordelier, 73.

Robespierre, with all his fanaticism in favour of democracy, felt, as strongly as any man in France, the necessity both of some religious impressions to form a curb upon the passions of the people, and of a strong central government to check their excesses. He early felt a horror at the infidel atrocities of the Municipality, and saw that such principles, if persisted in, would utterly disorganize society throughout France. With the sanguinary spirit of the times, he resolved to effect it by their extermination. The first indication of this determination appeared in his speech at the Jacobin Club in the end of November. "Let men," said he, "animated by a pure zeal, lay upon the altar of their country the useless and pompous monuments of superstition; but by what title does hypocrisy come here, to mingle its influence with that of patriotism? What right have men, hitherto unknown in the career of the Revolution, to come into the midst of you, to seek in passing events a false popularity, to hurry on the patriots to fatal measures, and to throw among them the seeds of trouble and discord? By what title do they disturb the existing worship in the name of Liberty, and attack fanaticism

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by a band of another kind of fanatics? There are men who would go farther: who, under the pretence of destroying superstition, would establish atheism itself. Every philosopher, every individual, is at liberty to adopt whatever opinion he pleases: whoever imputes it to him as a crime is a fool; but the legislator would be a thousand times more blameable, who should act on such a system. Atheism is an aristocratic belief. The idea of a Supreme Being, who watches over oppressed innocence, and punishes triumphant crime, is, and ever will be, popular. The people, the unfortunate, will ever applaud it; it will never find detractors, but among the rich and the guilty. *If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent his being.*"[1] *

[1] Th. vi. 15, 17.

But while thus preparing the way for the destruction of the Anarchists, Robespierre saw that it was necessary to make a sacrifice to the Revolutionary party, in order to avoid the blasting imputation of moderation, and keep up his reputation for unflinching resolution and incorruptible integrity. For this purpose, he resolved, at the same time, that he should cut off Hebert, Chaumette, and the Anarchists; to strike with equal severity against Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and the moderate party. By so doing, he would keep up the appearance of even-handed justice, establish the supremacy of the Committee of Public Safety over all the factions in the state, and remove the only rival that stood between him and sole dominion.[2]

[2] Th. vi. 186, 187.

Though ignorant that his destruction was resolved on by the all-powerful Committee of Public Safety, Danton was aware that for some months he had been waning in popularity, and he loudly demanded at the

* "Si Dieu n'existait pas il faudrait l'inventer."—THIERS, vi. 17.

Jacobins that the grounds of complaint should be exhibited against him. Robespierre instantly ascended the Tribune. "Danton," said he, "demands a commission to examine into his conduct: I consent to it, if he thinks it can be of any service to him. He demands a statement of the grounds of complaint against him: I agree to it. Danton, you are accused of being an emigrant; of having retired to Switzerland; of having feigned illness to conceal your flight; of being desirous to become Regent under Louis XVII.; of having made arrangements at a fixed on time to proclaim that remnant of the Capets; of being the chief of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy; of being a worse enemy to France than either Pitt or Cobourg, England, Austria, or Prussia; of having filled the Mountain with your creatures. It is said that we need not disquiet ourselves about the inferior agents of foreign powers; that their conspiracies merit only contempt; but you, you alone, should be led out to the scaffold!" Loud applauses followed this bold declaration; when they had subsided, he continued, turning to his astonished rival, "Do you not know, Danton, that the more a man is gifted with energy and public spirit, the more the public enemies conspire for his overthrow? Do you not know, does not every one who hears me know, that that is an infallible test of real virtue? If the defender of liberty was not calumniated, it would be a proof that we had no longer either generals, or priests, or nobles to fear." He then demanded that all those who had any thing to reproach against Danton should come forward; but none, after such a declaration, ventured to say a word. Upon that, amidst the applause of the meeting, he received the fraternal embrace from the President. By this hypocritical conduct, Robespierre both ascertain-

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ed the extent of the public feeling against his great rival, and threw him off his guard by feigned expressions of regard.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 21, 22.

Shortly after, a new decree, augmenting the despotic powers of the Committee of Public Safety, was passed. "Anarchy," said Billaud Varennes, in the preamble of the Report on which the decree was founded, "menaces every republic alike in its cradle and its old age. Our part is to strive against it." On this principle, the decree enacted, that a Bulletin of the Laws should be established; that four individuals should have the exclusive right of framing it; that it should be printed on a particular paper and type, and sent down to the provinces by post. The Convention was at the same time declared the "Centre of Impulsion of Government,"—a dubious phrase, under which was veiled the despotic authority of the Committees. The authority of the Departmental Assemblies was abolished, for every thing except matters of local administration; and they were forbidden, under pain of death, to correspond on any political matter with each other, raise forces or taxes of their own authority, or correspond with or receive instructions from any body but the Committees at Paris. Thus the liberties of the provinces were rapidly perishing under the despotic sway of the Committee of Public Safety; and France was already beginning to enter the bloody path, which leads from democratic anarchy to regular government.[1]

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[1] Th. vi. 30, 31.

Meanwhile, the strife of the Dantonists and Anarchists became daily more conspicuous. One of the latter, Ronsin, had affixed over all the walls of Paris a placard, in which he declared, that out of 140,000 souls at Lyons, 1500 only were not accomplices of the revolt in that city, and that before February all the

guilty should perish, and their bodies be floated by the Rhone to Toulon. Camille Desmoulins vigorously attacked this atrocious faction, and in an especial manner fastened on the infamous Hebert, whom he accused of being "a miserable intriguer, a caterer for the guillotine, a traitor paid by Pitt; a wretch who had received 200,000 francs at different times from almost all the factions in the Republic, to calumniate their adversaries; a thief and robber, who had been expelled from being a lackey in the theatre for theft, and now pretended to drench France with blood by his prostituted journal." Such was the man, on the testimony of the Revolutionists themselves, on whose evidence Marie Antoinette had been condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal. "It is in vain," he added, "to think of stifling my voice by threats of arrest: We all know that the Anarchists are preparing a new revolt, like the 31st May; but we may say with Brutus and Cicero, 'We fear too much exile, poverty, and death.' When our soldiers are daily braving death in sight of the enemy's batteries in the cause of freedom, shall we, their unworthy leaders, be intimidated by the menaces of the Père Duchesne, or prevented by him from achieving a still greater victory over the ultra-Revolutionists, who would ruin the Revolution, by staining every step it makes with gore?"[1]

[1] Th. vi. 34. 128, 129. Vieux Cordelier, Nos. 3, 9, 17.

Secret agreement between Robespierre and the Municipality.

While the parties were in this state of exasperation at each other, the Committee of Public Safety boldly interposed between them, and resolved to make their discords the means of destroying both. Profiting with political dexterity by this singular situation of the parties, Robespierre and the Members of the Municipality came to an understanding, the condition of which was the mutual abandonment of their personal friends. Robespierre gave up Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and

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their supporters, to the vengeance of the Municipality; and they surrendered Hebert, Chaumette, Ronsin, Clootz, and their party, to the Decemvirs. By this arrangement, two important objects were gained; a formidable faction was destroyed, and a rival to the reputation of the Dictator was removed.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 306. Th. vi. 186, 187. Lac. ii. 189.

Announcement of the Project in the Convention.

Robespierre first announced this project of double vengeance in the Assembly. "Without," said he, "all the tyrants of the earth are conspiring against you; within, all their friends are aiding their efforts; they will continue to do so till hope is severed from crime. We must stifle the exterior and internal enemies of the Republic, or perish with it. In such circumstances, the only principles of government are to govern the people by the force of Reason, and their enemies by the force of Terror. The spring of a popular government in peace is Virtue; in a revolution, it is Virtue and TERROR: Virtue, without which Terror is fatal —Terror, without which Virtue is impotent. The government of a revolution is the despotism of liberty against tyranny. The opposite factions with which we have to contend march under different banners, and by different routes; but their object is the same, the disorganization of the popular government, and the triumph of tyranny. The one tends to this object by its leaning to weakness; the other, by its tendency to excess." "The one of these factions," said St Just, "would change liberty into a Bacchanalian; the other, into a prostitute." This discourse was immediately printed and circulated through all France.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 307. Th. vi. 155, 156.

The Committee of Public Safety, through their organs, Robespierre and St Just, uniformly veiled their despotic advances, under the cloak of forwarding the Revolution, and represented the opposite factions as both acting under the direction, and for the benefit of

external force. "Foreign powers," said the former, "have vomited into France able villains, whom they retain in their pay. They deliberate in our administrations, insinuate themselves into our sections and our clubs, sit in the Convention, and eternally direct the Counter Revolution by the same means. They flutter round us, surprise our secrets, caress our passions, and seek to make us converts to their opinions. By turns they drive us to exaggeration or weakness, excite in Paris the fanaticism of the new worship, and in La Vendée resistance to the old; assassinate Marat and Lepelletier, and mingle with the group who would deify their remains; at one time spread plenty among the people, at another reduce them to all the horrors of famine; circulate and withdraw the metallic currency, and thus occasion the extraordinary changes in the value of money; profit, in fine, by every accident, to turn it against France and the Revolution." Such is the invariable policy of revolutionary parties, to impute to strangers the natural effect of their own passions and vices. This speech was followed by a decree, sending Biron, Custine's son, Dietrich, mayor of Strasbourg, and all the friends of Dumourier, Custine, and Houchard, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, from whence they were soon after conducted to the scaffold.[1] [1] Th. vi. 120, 121

"Citizens," said St Just, a few days after, "you wish a Republic; if you are not prepared at the same time to wish for what constitutes it, you will be buried under its ruins. Now, what constitutes a Republic is the destruction of every thing which opposes it. You are culpable towards the Republic if you have pity on the captives; you are culpable if you do not support virtue; you are culpable if you do not support terror. What do you propose, you who would not strike terror into the wicked? What do you pro-

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pose, you who would sever virtue from happiness? You shall perish, you who only act the patriot till bought by the stranger, or placed in office by the government; you, of the indulgent faction, who would save the wicked; you, of the foreign faction, who would be severe only on the friends of freedom. Measures are already taken; you are surrounded. Thanks to the genius of France, Liberty has risen victorious from one of the greatest dangers she ever encountered; the terror she will strike into her enemies, will for ever purge the earth of the conspirators." The Convention, awed by the tyrants, invested the committees with full power to crush the conspiracies. They decreed that *Terror and Virtue* should be the order of the day.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 309. Lac. ii. 145.

Proscription of the Anarchists.

The Anarchists were the first to feel the vengeance of their former supporters. They in vain endeavoured to rouse their ancient partisans in the Commune to support their cause; terror had frozen every heart. Their leaders made the utmost efforts to rouse the people to insurrection; and innumerable placards, ascribing the whole public evils, and in particular the famine which prevailed, to the convention, appeared in the markets, and in all the populous quarters of Paris. They even went so far as to propose that the whole Convention should be dissolved, a new one assembled, a dictator named, and an executive government organized. But all the efforts of Hebert, with his infamous journal,—Momoro, with the resolutions of the Section Marat, which he had roused to espouse their cause,—and Vincent, with his frenzied followers, could not produce a popular movement. The Municipality held back; the Jacobins were ruled by the Committee of Public Safety and Robespierre. Driven from the Club of the Jacobins, where the Decemvirs

predominated, they sought refuge in that of the Cordeliers, but all to no purpose. They were arrested by their former agent, Henriot, at the head of the armed force which they had so often wielded against the government, and sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal to stand trial for a conspiracy to put a tyrant at the head of affairs. Hebert, Gobet, Ronsin, Chaumette, Clootz, Momoro, and Vincent, were all condemned. They evinced the native baseness of their dispositions, by their cowardice in their last moments. The apostate Bishop Gobet almost sunk under his terrors; the infamous Hebert wept from weakness. The numerous captives in the prisons of Paris could hardly believe their eyes when they beheld the tyrants, who had sent so many to execution, and who were preparing a new massacre in the prisons, consigned, in their turn, to the scaffold. The populace, with their usual inconstancy, manifested joy at their punishment, and, in particular, loaded with maledictions the very Hebert, for whose deliverance from the arrest of the Convention, they had so recently before put all Paris in insurrection.[1]

Their disgraceful Death.

[1] Lac. ii. 144. Th. vi. 162, 168, 179, 182. Mig. ii. 310.

Such was the public avidity to see the execution of these leaders, late so popular, that considerable sums were realized by the sale of seats on the fatal chariots, to witness their agonies, and on the tables and benches arranged round the scaffold. Hebert made no attempt to conceal his terrors: He sunk down at every step; and the vile populace, so recently his worshippers, followed the car, mimicking the cry of the persons who hawked his journal about the streets. "Father Duchesne is in a devil of a rage." [2] *

[2] Th. vi. 182

The victory of the Decemvirs was complete. They

* "Il est b——t en colère le Père Duchêsne." In recounting such scenes, the spirit is lost if the very words are not used.

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[1] Mig. ii. 310. Lac. ii. 144.

Rupture of Danton and Robespierre

Danton, and his partisans, had not long the satisfaction of exulting over the destruction of the Anarchists. Robespierre and he had a meeting in the house of the former, but it led to no accommodation; Danton complained violently of the conduct of his former friend; Robespierre maintained a haughty reserve. "I know," said Danton, "all the hatred which the committee bear me, but I do not fear it."—"You are wrong," said Robespierre, "they have no bad intentions against you; but it is well to be explicit."—"To be explicit," rejoined Danton, "good faith is necessary. Without doubt it is necessary to coerce the Royalists; but we should not confound the innocent with the guilty."—"And who has told you," said Robespierre, "that one innocent person has perished?" Danton upon this, turning to the friend who accompanied him, said with a bitter smile: "What say you—Not one innocent has perished!" They parted mutually exasperated; all intercourse between them immediately ceased.[2]

[2] Mig. ii. 308. Th. vi. 189.

His Arrest.

The friends of Danton now conjured him to take steps to ensure his own safety; but no resource remained to ward off the threatened blow. The Club of the Cordeliers indeed was devoted to him; and the Convention in secret leaned to his side; but these bodies had no real power, the armed force was entirely in the hands of the Committee. Having failed in

rousing public opinion by means of the journals of his party, and the exertions of his friends in the Convention, what other expedients remained? "I would rather," said he, "be guillotined, than become guillotiner; my life is not worth the trouble of preserving; I am weary of existence. Set off into exile! do you suppose that one carries their country with the sole of their shoe?" On the day before his arrest, he received notice that his imprisonment was under the consideration of the Committee, and he was again pressed to fly; but, after a moment's deliberation, he only answered, "They dare not." In the night his house was surrounded, and he was arrested, along with Camille Desmoulins, Lacroix, Herault de Sechelles, and Westermann. On entering the prison, he cordially welcomed the captives who flocked to behold him. "Gentlemen," said he, "I hoped to have been the means of delivering you all from this place; but here I am among you, and God only knows where this will end." He was immediately afterwards shut up in a solitary cell, the same which Hebert had recently before occupied. On entering it he exclaimed, "At last I perceive that in revolutions the supreme power finally rests with the most abandoned."*[1]

[1] Riouffe, 67. Mig. ii. 310, 311. Th. vi. 190.

During the short period that elapsed before his execution, his mind, in a distracted state, reverted to the innocence of his earlier years. He spoke incessantly," says his fellow-captive, Riouffe, "of trees, flowers, and the country." Then giving way to unavailing regret, he exclaimed, "It was just a year ago, that I was the means of instituting the Revolutionary Tribunal: May God and man forgive me for what I did;[2]

[2] Mig. ii. 312. Th. vi. 192. Riouffe, 67.

* "Enfin je vois que dans les revolutions l'autorité toujours reste aux plus scélérats."—RIOUFFE, p. 67. A memorable sentiment coming from such lips.

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but it was not that it might become the scourge of humanity."

Violent Agitation in the Assembly.

His arrest produced a violent agitation in Paris; the Convention on the following morning was shaken by a general inquietude, which broke out in half suppressed murmurs. "Citizens!" said Legendre, "four of the National Representatives have been arrested during the night: Danton is one, I am ignorant of the others. Danton is as innocent as myself, and yet he is in irons. His accusers, without doubt, are afraid that his answers would destroy the charges brought against him; but you are bound to do justice; and I demand, that before the report of the Committee is received, he be examined in your presence." The proposition was favourably received, and for a moment the Assembly seemed disposed to shake off its fetters, till Robespierre mounted the Tribune. "From the trouble for long unknown which reigns in the Assembly; from the agitation produced by the words you have just heard, it is evident that a great interest is at stake, and that the point now to be determined is, whether the safety of a few individuals is to prevail over that of the country. We shall see this day whether the Convention has courage to break a pretended idol, or to suffer it in its fall to overwhelm the Assembly and the people of France. Danton, you shall answer to inflexible justice,—let us examine your conduct. Accomplice, in every criminal enterprise, you ever espoused the cause which was adverse to freedom: you intrigued with Mirabeau and Dumourier: with Hebert and Herault de Sechelles, you have made yourself the slave of tyranny. Mirabeau, who contemplated a change of dynasty, felt the value of your audacity, and secured it: you have abandoned all your former principles, and nothing more was heard of you till the massacre in

the Champs des Mars. At every crisis you have deserted the public interest: you have ever attached yourself to the traitor party." The terror inspired by these words restored silence to the Convention; and at the same time, St Just, followed by the other members of the Committee of Public Safety, entered the Hall. With slow steps, a sombre and decided air, they approached the Tribune, when Robespierre again addressed Legendre. "Go on; it is well that all the associates of the conspirators we have arrested should at once make themselves known. You have heard of the despotism of the Committees, as if the confidence which the people have reposed in you, and which you have transferred to the Committees, was not the surest guarantee of their patriotism. You affect to be afraid; but I say whoever trembles at this moment is guilty; for never did innocence fear the vigilance of the public authorities." Unanimous applause, from hands shaking with fright, followed these words. None ventured to incur the terrible imputation,—terror froze every heart; and St Just, without opposition, ascended the Tribune.[1]

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[1] Mig. ii. 312, 313. Lac. ii. 145. Th. vi. 194, 195. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 338.

He there made a detailed exposition of the grounds of accusation against the moderate party, recounted their private irregularities, their unpardonable clemency; charged them with being accomplices in every conspiracy, from that of the Royalists, whom they overthrew on the 10th August, to that of the Anarchists, whose treason had so recently been punished. The utter absurdity of imputing to them such contradictory crimes, and supposing them in league with their bitterest enemies, was too glaring to escape observation; but the Assembly, mastered by fear, crouched beneath their tyrants, and unanimously sent the accused to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The galle-

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ries imitated their example. From those benches whence had issued so often bursts of applause at his speeches, were now heard only fierce demands for his head. When removed to the Conciergerie, preparatory to their trial, the astonishment of the captives was as great as when they entered the Luxembourg. "My late brethren," said Danton, "understand nothing of government; I leave every thing in the most deplorable confusion: 'Twere better to be a poor fisherman than the ruler of men. My only comfort is, that my name is attached to some decrees which will show that I was not involved in all their fury."[1]

[1] Hist. de la Conv. iii. 338. Riouffe, 67. Lac. ii. 145. Thiers, vi. 198, 201. Mig. ii. 313.

Their Trial and Execution.

On their trial they evinced their wonted firmness, and addressed the judges in unusual terms of indignation. Danton, being interrogated by the President concerning his age and profession, replied, "My name is Danton, sufficiently known in the history of the Revolution; I am thirty-five; my abode will soon be in nonentity; and my name will live in the pantheon of history." Camille Desmoulins answered, that he was the same age as the "Sans Culotte, Jesus Christ, when he died." Danton spoke with energy and resolution in his own defence. "My voice," said he, with that powerful organ which had been so often raised in the cause of the people, "will have no difficulty in refuting the calumnies contained in the act of accusation. Let the cowards who accuse me be brought forward; I will speedily cover them with confusion. Let the Committees appear; I require them both as accusers and judges. Let them appear; they will not. It matters little what judgment you pronounce; I have already told you my abode will soon be in nonentity; my life is a burden, I am weary of it, and will rejoice in the stroke that sends me to the grave." The President rung his bell, but Danton's voice of

thunder drowned the noise. "Do you not hear me?" said the President. "The voice of a man," replied Danton, "who defends his honour and his life, may well overcome your clamours." His speech was at length choked with rage, and he sat down despairing of his cause. Nevertheless, the austere indignation of his manner, the nerve of Desmoulins, the measured ability of Lacroix, rendered the judges apprehensive of a movement in the populace; to prevent which, the Convention declared the accused *hors des débats*, on pretext of their want of respect to the Court. No sooner was this decree passed, than Amar hastened with it to the Tribunal, where Danton and his friends were prolonging their indignant defence. "Here are the means," said Amar, "for stifling these wretches." Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, seized it with avidity, and read it to the Court. Danton rose and called the audience to witness that they had not been wanting in respect to the judges. "The time will come," said he, "when the truth will be known; I foresee the greatest calamities to France; here is the dictator unveiled." On the day following, the debates were closed before they had begun their defence, notwithstanding the most energetic remonstrance from Camille Desmoulins, who called the audience to witness that they were murdered. The jury enclosed, and soon after the President returned, and, with a savage joy, declared the verdict was Guilty. The Court instantly pronounced sentence after they were removed, which was read to them in their cells in the evening. "We are sacrificed," said Danton, "to the ambition of a few dastardly brigands; but they will not long enjoy their triumph;—I drag Robespierre after me in my fall."[1]

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[1] Mig ii. 313. Lac. ii. 146. Pr. Hist. Th. vi. 203-212.

They went to the scaffold with the stoicism so

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usual at that period. A numerous escort attended them, and an immense crowd was assembled, which beheld in silence their former leaders led out for execution. Camille Desmoulins exclaimed, when seated on the fatal chariot, "This then is the recompense destined to the first apostle of Liberty." The base crowd who followed the cars loaded them with imprecations; the indignation of Camille Desmoulins was so excessive that he tore his shirt in venting it on the people. Danton held his head erect, and cast a calm and intrepid look around him. "Do not disquiet yourself," said he, "with that vile mob." At the foot of the scaffold he advanced to embrace Herault Sechelles, who held out his arms to receive him. The executioner interposed. "What," said he, with a bitter smile, "are you more cruel than death itself? Begone; you at least cannot prevent our lips from soon meeting in that bloody basket." For a moment after he was softened, and said, "Oh! my beloved! oh, my wife! shall I never see you more!" but immediately checking himself, exclaimed, "Danton, recollect yourself; no weakness." He ascended with a firm step, and died with unshaken constancy.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 314. Lac. ii. 146. Th. vi. 216. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 347.

The wife of Camille Desmoulins wandered incessantly round his prison during the short interval between his arrest and execution; her despair was made the pretence for declaring a new plot under the name of the "Conspiracy of the Prisons." She was arrested after his death, and sent to the scaffold, with Chaumette, Gobet, and the wife of Hebert, the infamous remnant of the Anarchist faction. She died with the serenity of Charlotte Corday and Madame Roland; while her unworthy associates disgraced their sex by more than feminine weakness.[2]

[2] Lac. ii. 146. Th. vi. 220, 221.

Thus perished the tardy but last defenders of hu-

manity and moderation—the last who sought for peace, and advocated clemency to those who had been vanquished in the Revolution. For long after their fall, no voice was heard against the Reign of Terror; silent and unopposed, the tyrants struck redoubled blows from one end of France to the other. The Girondists had sought to prevent that fatal rule, the Dantonists to arrest it; both perished in the attempt. They perished, because they were inferior in wickedness to their opponents; they fell the victims of the humanity which lingered in their bosoms.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 314.

The combination of wicked men who thereafter governed France is without a parallel in the history of the world. Their power, based on the organized weight of the multitude, and the ardent co-operation of the Municipalities, everywhere installed by them in the possession of power, was irresistible. By them opulent cities were overturned, hundreds of thousands of deluded artisans reduced to beggary, agriculture, commerce, the arts destroyed, the foundations of every species of property shaken, and all the youth of the kingdom driven to the frontier, less to uphold the integrity of France, than to protect themselves from the just vengeance which awaited them from within and without. All bowed the neck before this gigantic assemblage of wickedness. The revolutionary excesses daily increased, in consequence of the union which the constant dread of retribution produced among their perpetrators. There was no medium between taking a part in these atrocities, and falling a victim to them. Virtue seemed powerless; energy appeared only in the extremity of resignation; religion in the heroism with which death was endured. There was not a hope left for France, had it not been for the dissensions, which, as the natural result of their wickedness, sprung up among the authors of the public calamities.[2]

[2] Hist. de la Conv. iii. 230.

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General Reflections. Resistless Power of Robespierre.

It is impossible not to be struck, in looking back on the fate of these different parties, with the singular and providential manner in which their crimes brought about their own punishment. No foreign interposition was necessary, no avenging angel was required to vindicate the justice of Divine administration. They fell the victims of their own atrocity, of the passions which they themselves had let loose, of the injustice of which they had given the first example to others. The Constitutionalists overthrew the ancient monarchy, and formed a limited government; but their imprudence in rousing popular ambition paved the way for the 10th August, and speedily brought themselves to the scaffold: the Girondists established their favourite dream of a Republic, and were the first victims of the fury which it excited; the Dantonists roused the populace against the Gironde, and soon fell under the axe which they had prepared for their rivals: the Anarchists defied the powers of Heaven itself; but scarcely were their blasphemies uttered, when they were swept off by the partners of their bloody triumphs.

One only power remained, alone terrible, irresistible. This was the power of DEATH, wielded by a faction steeled against every feeling of humanity, dead to every principle of justice. In their iron hands, order resumed its sway from the influence of terror; obedience became universal from the extinction of hope. Silent and unresisted they led their victims to the scaffold, dreaded alike by the soldiers who crouched, the people who trembled, and the victims who suffered. The history of the world has no parallel to the horrors of that long night of suffering, because it has none to the guilt which preceded it; tyranny never assumed so hideous a form, because licentiousness never required so severe a punishment.

CHAPTER XI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1793.—PART I.

FROM THE OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE FORCING OF THE CAMP OF CÆSAR.

ARGUMENT.

Great division of Opinion on the French Revolution in Great Britain—Arguments against and for the War in the Country—Arguments in Parliament on the same subject—Real motives which led to its being undertaken—Parliamentary Reform—Arguments by which the Motion for it was supported; and the Arguments against it—It is rejected by the House of Commons—Traitorous Correspondence Act passed, and Prosecutions for Sedition and Treason—Preparations for War by Great Britain and the Allies—Effect of the Death of Louis at St Petersburg—Treaty between England and Russia, and with Sardinia, Prussia, the Emperor, Naples, and Spain—Secret Views of Russia—Divisions between the Prussians and Austrians—Forces on both sides—Wretched state of the French Armies—Prince Cobourg, Generalissmo—Vast efforts of France—Designs of Dumourier; and of the Allied Generals—Archduke Charles joins the Army—Repeated Disasters of the Republicans—Great sensation produced by them in Flanders—Efforts of Dumourier—Battle of Nerwinde—Defeat of the French—Disorganization of their Army—Retreat of Dumourier—Conferences with Prince Cobourg—His failure and Flight—Conquest of Austrian Flanders by the Allies—Defeat of Austrian projects on the Rhine—Siege of Mayence—Defeat of the attack on the Covering Army—Its Fall—Congress at Antwerp to form a plan for the Campaign—Republicans forced back to Famars—Storming of the Camp there—Valenciennes and Conde invested—Siege of the former, and Blockade of the latter—They both Fall—Custine, with the Army of Flanders, takes Refuge in Intrenched Camps—Rout in the Camp of Cæsar—Desperate condition of the French—General Reflections on the Events, and the ease with which France might then have been Conquered if the Allies had held together—Ruinous effect of the English Reduction of Force.

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"WAR to the palace, and peace to the cottage," was the principle of the French Revolution. Its proclamation necessarily set the two classes of society throughout Europe at variance with each other; and, instead of the ancient rivalry of kings, introduced the fiercer strife of the people. Like the Peloponnesian

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war, the contest thenceforth raged not only between nation and nation, but between interest and interest; a strife of opinion superseded that of glory; and in every province and every city, numbers were to be found who watched the contending parties, with opposite feelings, and sought in the victory of foreign enemies the downfal of domestic foes.

A contest between France and England has, in every age, been the greatest source of excitement to the people in both countries; but at no former period were these passions so strongly roused as at the commencement of the Revolutionary war. Not only was national rivalry, the growth of centuries, revived, but new and fiercer passions arose from the civil interests which were brought into collision. The dominant party in England regarded the war with France, not merely as a contest with a rival power, in which glory or conquest was to be won, but as a struggle for existence, in which their lives, their fortunes, and their country, were at stake. The French Republicans looked upon the accession of England to the league of their enemies, as the signal of deadly combat with the principles of freedom; and anticipated from defeat not only national humiliation, but individual ruin. The English nobility beheld in the conquests of the Republicans the dissemination of the principles of revolution and anarchy, the spread of infidelity, the reign of the guillotine; the French Jacobins saw in the victories of the Allies the near approach of moral retribution, the revenge of injury, the empire of the sword.

Great division of opinion on the French Revolution in Great Britain.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the bitterness of party feeling which divided this country upon the breaking out of the war in 1793. England, as well as France, had talent impatient of obscurity; ar-

dour, which demanded employment; ambition, which sought distinction; passion, which required excitation. To such men, the whole body of the aristocracy became an object of uncontrollable jealousy; and nothing short of the equality proclaimed by the French rulers seemed the fit destiny of society. Hence the division of the country into Aristocrats and Democrats; the introduction of political hatred into the bosom of families, and the dissolution of many friendships which all the misfortunes of life could never have severed.[1] Time heals almost all other sorrows, absence softens the worst causes of irritation, but experience has proved, that the political divisions of 1793 never were forgotten by those who were of an age to feel their influence.

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[1] Scott's Napoleon, i. 280.

Arguments against and for the war.

The breaking out of the war furnished a new subject of discord between the contending parties. On the part of the opposition, it was argued, that to plunge into a desperate war, for so inconsiderable an object as the opening of the Scheldt, was to incur a certain and heavy loss on account of a most trifling cause of complaint: that the whole trade with the United Provinces was not worth one year's expense of the contest; and that, while it was easy to see what England had to lose, it was difficult to conceive what she could possibly gain from the conflict she had so unnecessarily provoked: that if the spread of revolutionary opinions were the evils which, in reality, were dreaded, nothing could be imagined so likely to increase the danger as engaging in a war, because it is during its perils that the interchange of opinions is most rapid, and prejudice most certainly yields to the force of necessity: that thoughts are not to be confined by walls, nor freedom fenced in by bayonets: that the moral agents requisite for carrying the de-

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signs of tyranny into execution, become the instruments for its own destruction; and that the despots who now sought to extinguish freedom in France, would find, like the Eastern Sultan, that the forces he had brought up to avert the plague, were the means of spreading its contagion through all the provinces of his empire.

On the other hand, the Tories maintained that the war was both just and expedient; just, because the ancient allies of Britain were threatened with invasion, and the destruction of rights on which the existence of the Republic depended; expedient, because experience had proved that such an aggression could not be permitted without ruin to the vital interests of Britain: that such a violation of neutral rights came with a peculiar bad grace from France, that power having, only ten years before, successfully interfered on the footing of ancient treaties, to prevent that very act in regard to the Scheldt navigation, on the part of Austria, which was now attempted by her own forces; that if Great Britain was to sit by and tamely behold the rights of her allies, and of all neutral powers, sacrificed by her ancient rival, there would soon be an end, not only to her foreign influence, but to her internal security: that it was evident that the Republicans, who had now acquired the government of France, were actuated by the spirit of universal dominion, and would never rest, till, by the aid of revolution in the adjoining states, they had incorporated them all with the ruling Republic: that the recent annexation of Savoy, Nice, and Flanders, with the French territory, gave sufficient proof of this grasping disposition, and afforded due warning to the neighbouring powers to place no reliance on the professions of a state, in which no principle was fixed but that of republican ambition:

that treaties were vain with a government subject to such sudden changes as the French Republic, and in which each successive party which rose to the head of affairs, disregarding the faith of ancient engagements, sought only to gain a short-lived popularity by new and dazzling schemes of foreign aggression: that the Convention had already given the clearest indication of their resolution to shake themselves loose of all former obligations, by their remarkable declaration, that "Treaties made by despots could never bind the free and enlightened inhabitants of Belgium:" that in all ages republics had been the most ambitious, and the most warlike of states, in consequence of the restless and insatiable spirit which their institutions tended to nourish among the mass of the citizens, and the necessity which their rulers felt themselves under of signalizing their short-lived power by some acts calculated to dazzle the multitude: that the French Republic had already given ample proof that they were not destined to form any exception to the general rule, and if their leaders were so inclined, the suffering and ambition of the people would soon drive them into action: that history proved both that France was too powerful for Europe, when her territory was advanced to the Rhine, and that the moment her influence became predominant, it would all be directed with inveterate hostility against this country: that in this way the contest would sooner or later approach our own shores, and if so, how much better to anticipate the evil, when it might be done with comparative ease, and crush the growing Republic before it wielded the forces of Europe at its will.[1]

[1] Parl. Hist. xxx. p. 79—128. Annual Register, 1793, p. 15.

Such were the arguments urged in the country generally on the policy of this great undertaking: those advanced in Parliament related, as is usual with de-

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bates in that assembly, less to the general policy of the measure than the immediate causes which had led to a rupture.

Arguments in Parliament on the same subject.

On the part of the opposition, it was contended by Mr Fox and Mr Grey, "that the causes of war with France were in no respect different now from what they were under the government of Louis XIV. or Louis XVI. What, then, were those causes? Not an insult or aggression, but a refusal of satisfaction, when specifically demanded. What instance had ministers produced of such demand and of such refusal? It may be admitted that the decree of November 19th entitled this country to require an explanation; but even of this they could not show that any clear and specific explanation had been demanded. Security that the French would not act upon that decree was, indeed, mentioned in one of Lord Grenville's letters, but what kind of security was neither specified, nor even named. The same might be said with respect to the opening of the Scheldt, and their conquest of Brabant. We complained of an attack on the rights of our ally; we remonstrated against an accession of territory alarming to Europe, but we proposed nothing that would be admitted as satisfaction for the injury; we pointed out nothing that would remove our alarm. The same argument applied to their conquest of Savoy from the King of Sardinia, with whom, in his opinion, they were at war as much as with the Emperor. Would it be said, that it was our business only to complain, and theirs to propose satisfaction? Common sense would see that this was too much for one independent power to expect of another. By what clue could they discover that what would satisfy those who did not choose to tell with what they would be satisfied? How could they judge of the too little, or the

too much? And was it not natural for them to suppose that complaints, for which nothing was stated as adequate satisfaction, there was no disposition to withdraw? Yet on this the whole question of aggression hinged; for that the refusal of satisfaction, and not the insult, was the justifiable cause of war, was not merely his opinion, but the opinion of all the writers on the law of nations, and how could that be said to have been refused, which was never asked? Of the death of the King, none could ever speak but with grief and detestation. But was the expression of our sorrow all? Was not the atrocious event made the subject of a message from his Majesty to both Houses of Parliament? And now they would ask the few more candid men who owned that they thought this event alone a sufficient cause of war, what end could be gained by farther negociation with Chauvelin, with Marat, or Dumourier? Did ministers mean to barter the blood of this ill-fated monarch for any of the points in dispute; to say that the evacuation of Brabant shall atone for so much, the evacuation of Savoy for so much more? Of this they would accuse no man; but on their principle, when the crime was committed negociation must cease. It might be admitted, however, with the right honourable gentleman, that this crime was no cause of war; but if it were admitted to be so, it was surely not decent that the subject of war should never be even mentioned without reverting to the death of the King. When the attack on France was called the cause of kings, it was not only a very witty, but a sufficient reply, that opposing it might be called the cause of subjects. It is fortunate that the public abhorrence of a war on such a motive was so great that the right honourable gentleman felt himself called upon to disclaim it at great length. But how had

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ministers acted? They had taken advantage of the folly of the French; they had negociated without proposing specific terms, and then broken off the negociation. At home they had alarmed the people that their own constitution was in danger, and they had made use of a melancholy event, which, however it might affect us as men, did not concern us as a nation, to inflame our passions and impel us to war; and now that we were at war, they durst not avow the causes of it, nor tell us on what terms peace might have been preserved.

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Pitt and Mr Burke, that, "whatever temptations might have existed to this country from ancient enmity and rivalship, paltry motives indeed! or whatever opportunity might have been afforded by the tumultuous and distracted state of France, or whatever sentiments might be excited by the transactions which had taken place in that nation, his Majesty had uniformly abstained from all interference in its internal government, and had maintained, with respect to it, on every occasion, the strictest and most inviolable neutrality. Such being his conduct towards France, he had a right to expect on their part a suitable return; more especially as this return had been expressly conditioned for by a compact, into which they entered, and by which they engaged to respect the rights of his Majesty and his allies, not to interfere in the government of any neutral country, and not to pursue any system of aggrandizement, or make any additions to their dominions, but to confine themselves at the conclusion of the war within their own territories. These conditions they had all grossly violated, and had adopted a system of ambitious and destructive policy, fatal to the peace and security of every government, and

which, in its consequences, had shaken Europe itself to its foundations. Their decree of the 19th of November, which had been so much talked of, offering fraternity and affiance to all people who wish to recover their liberty, was a decree not levelled against particular nations, but against every country where there was any form of government established; a decree not hostile to individuals, but to the human race; which was calculated every where to sow the seeds of rebellion and civil contention, and to spread war from one end of Europe to the other, from one end of the globe to the other. While they were bound to this country by these engagements, they had showed no intention to exempt it from the consequences of this decree. Not only had they showed no inclination to fulfil their engagements, but they had even put it out of their own power, by taking the first opportunity to make additions to their territory, in contradiction to their own express stipulations. By express resolutions for the destruction of the existing government of all invaded countries, by the means of Jacobin societies, by orders given to their generals, by the whole system adopted in this respect by the National Assembly, and by the actual connection of the whole country of Savoy, they had marked their determination to add to the dominions of France, and to provide means, through the medium of every new conquest, to carry their principles over Europe. Their conduct was such, as in every instance had militated against the dearest and most valuable interests of this country. The catastrophe of the French Monarch they ought all to feel deeply; and, consistently with that impression, be led more firmly to resist those principles from which an event of so black and atrocious a nature had proceeded; principles which, if not

CHAP. XI. 1793. opposed, might be expected in their progress to lead to the commission of similar crimes; but, notwithstanding government had been obliged to decline all communication which tended to acknowledge the authority of the Convention, still they had left open the means of accommodation, nor could that line of conduct which they had pursued be stated as affording any ground of hostility."

The event has at length enabled the historian to decide which of these views is the most reasonable; for we know the evil we have incurred, and we can figure the peril we have escaped, by engaging in the contest. In truth, the arguments urged by government were not the only motives for commencing the war; the danger they apprehended lay nearer home than the conquests of the republicans; it was not foreign subjugation, so much as domestic revolution, which was dreaded, if a pacific intercourse were any longer maintained with France.

Real motives for the War.

"Croyez moi," said the Empress Catherine to Segur, in 1789, "une guerre seule peut changer la direction des esprits en France, les réunir, donner un but plus utile aux passions et réveiller le vrai patriotisme."[1] In this observation is contained the true secret, and the best vindication of the revolutionary war. The passions were excited; democratic ambition was awakened; the desire of power, under the name of reform, was rapidly gaining ground among the middling ranks, and the institutions of the country threatened with an overthrow, as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. In these circumstances, the only mode of checking the evil was by engaging in a foreign contest, by drawing off the ardent spirits into active ser-

[1] Segur, iii. 242.

vice, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, rousing the ancient gallantry of the British people.[1]

When passion, whether in the political body or in the individual, is once roused, it is in vain, during the paroxysm, to combat it with the weapons of reason. A man in love is proverbially inaccessible to argument, and a nation heated in the pursuit of political power is as incapable of listening to the deductions of the understanding. The only way in such times of averting the evil, is by presenting some new object of pursuit, which is not only attractive to the thinking few, but to the unthinking many; by counteracting one passion by the growth of another, and summoning to the support of truth not only the armour of reason, but the fire of imagination.

[1] Annual Register, 1793, p. 172.

Great as has been the burden, enormous the waste, prodigal the expenditure of the war, the evils thence arising are trifling in comparison of what would have ensued had a Revolution taken place. Such an event, its advocates themselves confess, can only benefit future generations by the destruction of the present;[2] its horrors, in a country such as England, where three-fourths of the whole population depend upon the wages of labour, and would be directly deprived of bread by the destruction of capital, would have exceeded any thing yet experienced in modern times.

[2] Segur, iii. 251.

Another question, which strongly agitated the English people at this juncture, was that of reform in Parliament.

Debate in Parliament on Parliamentary Reform.

In the House of Commons, it was argued by Mr Grey and Mr Erskine, "That the state of the national representation, especially in Scotland and Cornwall, was so unequal, that no rational argument could be advanced in support of it: that a majority of the House of Commons was returned by less than fifteen thousand

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electors, which is not more than a two-hundredth part of the male adults of the kingdom: that this franchise, limited as it is, legally recurs only once in seven years: that the total representation for Scotland was only one greater than that for Cornwall alone: that twenty members were returned by thirty-five places where the right of voting was vested in burgage or similar tenures, and the elections were notoriously a matter of mere form: that ninety more are chosen by forty-six places, where the right of voting is confined to less than fifty persons each: thirty-seven by nineteen places, in which the number of voters is under one hundred; fifty-two by twenty-six places, in none of which the voters exceed two hundred: thirty in Scotland, by counties having less than two hundred and fifty votes; and fifteen by Scotch boroughs not containing one hundred and twenty-five each. That in this way two hundred and ninety-four members, a majority of the House of Commons, are chosen by a nominal and fictitious system, under which the people have hardly any choice in their election.

"In addition to this, the elective franchise is so various, complicated, and grotesque, that endless litigation and confusion arise from its practical operation. Religious opinions create an incapacity to vote in all Papists, and in thirty boroughs Protestant dissenters are, by the Test and Corporation laws, excluded from the franchise; copyholders, how wealthy soever, are universally excluded; and from the recent returns, it appears that no less than 939,000 householders in England alone had no voice in the representation. In Scotland, matters are still worse, the great mass of the people being altogether excluded from any voice in the legislature, and the members chosen by twenty-five hundred persons, great part of whom have only ficti-

tious or parchment votes. In fine, one hundred and fifty-four powerful and wealthy individuals can determine the returns in no less than three hundred and seven seats, being a majority of the whole Commons of England.[1] CHAP. XI. 1793.

[1] Parl. Hist. xxx. 789, 796.

"We are always told, when this question is brought forward, that the present juncture is not the proper season for bringing forward the measure. Nothing, however, can be more obvious, than that this excuse is now totally unfounded. The burst of loyalty on the breaking out of the war, of which the Government so loudly boast, demonstrates the groundless nature of any such apprehension at this time. If ever there was any danger to this country from the propagation of French principles, that danger unquestionably is at an end; for no set of men who have not actually lost their senses, would ever propose the French Revolution for a model of imitation. No argument from the present situation of France, therefore, can be drawn against the adoption of a rational reform in this country.

"The greatest statesmen whom this country has ever produced have advocated the cause which we now bring forward. It had been supported by Mr Locke, Sir William Blackstone, Sir George Saville, and the present Chief Baron and Chief Justice. It had been supported by Mr Pitt himself; by the Duke of Richmond; and by an authority greater than either, that of the King himself, in his speech, 24th May 1784, wherein his Majesty says, 'that he should ever be ready to concur in supporting, in their just balance, the rights and privileges of every branch of the Legislature.'

"The present state of the representation is so monstrous, that it could not, on general principles, be sup-

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ported by any rational man. Who can defend a system which enables one English county to send as many members as the whole kingdom of Scotland? and allows representatives to be sent from many places where hardly a house now remains? If there was any one principle more strongly inculcated than another at the Revolution, it was, that the election of the House of Commons should be free. One of the grounds assigned at that period for the dethronement of James was, that he had violated the freedom of election; another, that a man ought not to be governed by laws, in the framing of which he had not a voice, or to pay taxes to which he had not consented in the same way. Is not the present state of things a direct departure from both these principles? At the Revolution, too, the necessity of short Parliaments was asserted; and is not the theory and practice of the constitution now a direct infringement on these principles? Can there be a more complete mockery than the system of representation in Scotland, where a nobleman's steward goes down to a borough with ten or twelve pieces of parchment in his hand, and, having assembled round a table ten or twelve of his master's dependents, secures the return. Mr Pitt had brought forward a motion for an addition of one hundred to the county members; and in the commencement of every session, it is entered on the journals of the House, 'That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of England for any Lord of Parliament, or Lord Lieutenant, to concern themselves in the election of members for Parliament.' Better far at once to repeal such resolutions, and openly proclaim our servility, than allow them to remain there, when the practice was so totally at variance with them."[1]

[1] Parl. Hist. xxx. 799, 807.

To this it was replied by Mr Pitt, Mr Burke, and

Mr Jenkinson,—" The liberty of a country depends on its government, and very little experience must be sufficient to demonstrate that different countries require different institutions. The real test of their practical influence is to be found in their effects. Judging by this standard, what opinion must we form of the British constitution? Is not property secured? Is not the administration of justice pure? Have we not arrived at a pitch of prosperity under it, unparalleled in any other age or country? And what have been the fruits of the speculations of those who, disregarding the lessons of experience, have aimed at the establishment of institutions framed with a view to theoretical perfection? The turbulent faction and unsettled despotism of democracy. The spots of the sun do not diminish his splendour. In considering the merits of the constitution, its working upon the whole is to be considered: the question is not, whether certain parts of it, if they stood alone, are defensible, but whether the whole machine is not admirable: not whether defects exist, but whether experience has not proved that these defects so far counteract each other, as to render it to the last degree perilous to interfere with the venerable fabric. CHAP. XI. 1793.

" I myself," said Mr Pitt, " once brought forward a motion for reform, and I am desirous of stating the reasons which induce me now to oppose it. I did so during a period of profound peace, when no speck appeared in the political horizon, and when the opportunity appeared favourable for amending our institutions, with a view to their preservation. Now the case is totally different. The French Revolution has entirely changed, not only the expedience of such a change, but the class of men by whom, and the objects for which, it is supported. Since that great convul-

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sion arose, I have observed arising in this country a small, but not contemptible party, whose object is very different from moderate reform: who aspire to nothing less than to introduce the French principles with all their horrors. In such circumstances, all the practical good to be expected from reform has disappeared, and the dangers to be apprehended from the adoption of any considerable change have augmented tenfold. Upon this ground, even had I rated as high as ever the advantages of reform, I would rather have abandoned my project than incurred such a danger. It is evident now, that the question is not, whether a moderate reform is to be conceded, but admission is to be afforded to the point of the wedge, which, when driven home, will rend asunder and dissolve the empire.

"From whom do the petitions for reform now come? Is it from the friends of the British constitution; from those whose character and principles warrant the belief, that their object is to renovate, not destroy our institutions? No; they all come from the societies affiliated in this country for the purpose of spreading the Jacobin principles; from the avowed and ardent admirers of the French Republic; from the correspondents and imitators of the National Assembly; from men in whom all the horrors which they have engendered, and all the blood they have caused to flow, cannot awaken any distrust of their principles. We must be blind, indeed, if we do not perceive what is the real object of innovation supported by such a party. In France, at the same time, they invariably mention Parliamentary reform as the medium by which all their revolutionary projects are to be forwarded in this country; and a change in our representation, as but a step to the formation of a British convention, and

the total destruction of all our civil and religious institutions. CHAP. XI. 1793.

"Is it, then, to a party small in number, but dangerous from character, that we are to concede the first step on the ladder of innovation? Are we to disregard entirely the immense majority of loyal citizens, who are too sensible of the blessings they enjoy, to risk them by such a change? What is the question really at issue? It is not whether the constituencies of Cornwall and Scotland are really such as ideal perfection would approve: it is the same which is now at issue with the whole of Europe, who are contending for the cause of order, justice, humanity, and religion, in opposition to anarchy, injustice, cruelty, and infidelity. Are we at such a moment, in order to please a few individuals, to incur perils such as these? This would, indeed, resemble the conduct of those who, at the moment when the citadel was besieged, should proceed to the discussion of points of difference, instead of providing the means of defence.

"I see no probability at this time of a temperate reform: I see no guarantee for it either in the temper of the times, or the character, habits, or views of those by whom it is supported. So far from satisfying them, it would only produce a craving for farther concessions: they desire not the reform which they now advocate for itself, but as a stepping-stone to ulterior objects which they dare not avow, till their power of carrying them into effect is by this first acquisition secured. Knowing what these ulterior objects are: seeing the unspeakable horrors which it has introduced in that country where they have been carried into full effect, it is our duty to resist to the uttermost the first steps in the progress. The government which acts otherwise ceases to be a government; it unties the

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bands which knit together society: it forfeits the reverence and obedience of its subjects: it gives up those whom it ought to protect to the daggers of the Marsellaise, and the assassins of Paris. The government of the multitude, to which reform is but a step, is not the ruling of the few by the many, but the many by the few: with this difference, that the few at the head of affairs in such a state, are the most ambitious, reckless, and worthless of the community."[1] *

Parl. Hist. xxx. 808, 902.

* It is curious on a subject of such vital importance to England as Parliamentary Reform, to contrast these arguments with those urged for and against the same measure in the memorable discussions of 1830 and 1831. A summary of these is here subjoined, taken from the masterly speeches of Sir Robert Peel, Mr Croker, Lord Lyndhurst, Mr Stanley, and Lord Advocate Jeffrey, as an instructive proof of the progress of the human mind during the intervening period.

Parliamentary Reform. Arguments by which it was supported in 1831.

On the popular side, it was urged that the British constitution had gradually departed from the principles on which it was originally established, and on which alone stability could be expected for it in future: that by the decline of the population in some boroughs, and the vast increase of inhabitants in once rural districts, a large proportion of the members of the House of Commons had come to be returned by a few great families, while the great majority of the people were totally unrepresented: that such a state of things was an insupportable grievance to the bulk of the citizens, and could not fail, while it continued, to nourish a perpetual discord between the holders of political influence and all the other classes of society: that an oligarchy, at all times an invidious form of government, was peculiarly so at the present time, when the public mind was inflamed by the extension of the elective suffrage to the whole citizens in France: that, by admitting a larger number into a share of political rights, the foundations of government would be laid on a broader basis, and a phalanx secured, who would at all times resist the extension of their privileges to a lower class, and be found the firmest supporters of social order: that it was altogether chimerical to suppose, that there could be the slightest danger in extending the elective suffrage to a numerous body of voters, as the people were so habituated to political rights, and so enlightened by education, that they were as capable of exercising such franchises as their superiors: that unless political institutions were enlarged with the increase of those who shared their protection, they would be outgrown by the multitude, and burst from the expansive force of intelligence and numbers: that the true and legitimate influence of property could never be extinguished, and would

Fortunately for England, and for the cause of freedom throughout the world, these arguments prevailed

only receive a wider sphere for its exertions, by the increase of the circle to which the franchise was extended: that all Revolutions had been occasioned by the obstinate adherence to old institutions, at a time when the state of society required their alteration: that timely concession was the only way to prevent convulsion, and in the present excited state of the public mind, if it was any longer delayed, the barriers of authority would be broken, and all the horrors of the French Revolution brought upon the state.

Arguments against it.

On the other hand, it was contended by the aristocratic party, that the present was not a motion for the reform of a real grievance, which was at all times entitled to the most serious attention, but for an increase of political power by the lower orders, which was to be conceded or resisted, according to its obvious tendency to preserve or subvert the balance of the constitution: that it was totally different from Mr Pitt's previous proposals of reform, which went to remove an admitted evil in a period of tranquillity; whereas the present motion was founded on a concession to French principles, and democratic ambition, at a time of unexampled excitement: that it was evident that the popular party was already sufficiently strong, from the tenor of the acts which had been passed since the Revolution, which went rather to enlarge than abridge the liberty of the subject: that any farther concession, therefore, would necessarily have the effect of overloading the balance on the popular side, and endangering the monarchical institutions of the state: that it was in vain to refer to early times for a precedent in support of a farther extension of the elective franchise, since the state of society was then essentially different from what it now is: that the power of the sword was then vested in the feudal barons, and the country was overspread with their armed retainers: whereas now, the progress of wealth, and the invention of fire-arms, had destroyed this formidable power, while the increase of manufactures had augmented to a very great degree the power of the middling ranks, and the diffusion of knowledge had increased tenfold their practical influence: that it might be quite safe to require representatives from all the boroughs, when the commons were a humble class in the state, and began their petitions with the words, "For God's sake, and as an act of mercy," while it would be highly dangerous to adopt a similar course, when the numbers of that class exceeded that of the agriculturists, and their wealth overbalanced that of all the other orders in the state: that the example of the Long Parliament sufficiently demonstrated that concession to popular clamours only led to fresh demands; and conducted, by an irresistible progress, to anarchy and revolution: that the fatal consequences which had recently attended the duplication of the Tiers Etat, the

CHAP. XI. 1793. in the House of Commons. The motion for reform brought forward by Lord Grey, was negatived by a

parliamentary reform of France, was a signal example of the effects of that concession to democratic ambition, which was now so loudly called for: that the King had there yielded up all the prerogatives of his crown, and the nobles had made a voluntary surrender of their whole titles, rights, and privileges, and the consequence was, that the commons became irresistible, and the one was brought to an ignominious death, and the other rewarded by exile, confiscation, and the scaffold: that the rotten boroughs, so much the object of invective, were, in truth, the most important part of the British Constitution, and which alone had, contrary to all former experience, so long maintained the balance of the three estates, because they gave a direct influence to property in the Legislature, and enabled the increasing wealth of the aristocracy to maintain its ground against the growing influence of the commons: that an inlet was thus provided to Parliament for men of talent, which had proved the means of introduction to our greatest statesmen, and which, if closed, would degrade its character, and convert the representatives of the people into the mere supporters of separate interests: that it was in vain to expect, in the present period of excitement, and with the example of successful revolt in France, that wealth could permanently influence the lower orders, or maintain its ground, if deprived of this constitutional channel in the House of Commons: that reform, therefore, would necessarily lead to revolution; and what revolution led to, need not be told to those who had witnessed the Reign of Terror: that the hope of attaching a large portion of the lower orders, by the extension of the elective franchise, however specious in theory, would prove fallacious in practice, because they would soon find that their votes, from their great multiplication, were of no value: that they had been deceived by the name of a privilege of no real service, and that the only way to obtain any practical benefit from their exertions, was to league with the inferior classes for a general spoliation of the higher: that this was the natural tendency of the lower orders in all wealthy states, because union with the higher afforded no immediate advantage, whereas a league with the lower gave the prospect of a division of property, and liberation from burdens, and was, in an especial manner, to be apprehended in Britain at this time, both because the public burdens were so excessive, property so unequally divided, and the example of a successful division of estates in France so recent: that a reform in Parliament, unlike all other ameliorations, was to the last degree dangerous, because it was the voluntary surrender of legislative power to the lower orders, which could never be recovered, and a false step once taken, was irretrievable: that, supposing there were some defects in the constitution indefensible in theory, it could not

majority of 282 to 41. The threats of revolution immediately subsided; the threatened convulsions disappeared; and a measure, which it was confidently predicted, would for ever alienate the higher from the lower orders, was succeeded by a degree of unanimity between them, in the most difficult times, such as had

It is rejected by the House of Commons.

be disputed that, in practice, it had proved the best protection to the rights and interests of all classes that had ever existed in the world: that, least of all, could the manufacturing or commercial bodies complain that their interests were not duly attended to in Parliament, since the whole policy of the State, for above a century, had been directed, perhaps too exclusively, to their advantage: that the representation which the great colonial, commercial, and shipping interests, now obtained by means of the purchase of close boroughs, would be annihilated if this mode of entering Parliament were closed: that thus, the real effect of reform would be to vest the supreme power in the mob of England, to the exclusion of all the great and varied interests which had risen up over the whole globe in the British dependencies: that such a state of things had proved fatal to all former republics, and could not fail speedily to lead to the dismemberment of the British empire: that if corruption were the evil that was really apprehended, no mode of increasing it could be so effectual as diminishing the close, where it existed from the paucity of inhabitants on the smallest, and increasing the middling boroughs, where experience had proved bribery was practised on the most extensive scale: that any reform would thus diminish the private to increase the venal boroughs: that, as it was evident wealth could maintain its ground in the contest with numbers only, by means of the expenditure of money, it was incomparably better that this necessary influence should be exerted in the decent retirement of antiquated boroughs, than in the shameless prostitution of great cities: that the danger of revolution so strongly urged on the other side, in fact only existed if the reform measure was carried, inasmuch as history demonstrated, that no convulsions had ever shaken the English monarchy, but those which emanated from the House of Commons: that it was rash measures of legislation which were alone to be dreaded; and words spoken from authority, that set the world on fire: that the Constitution had now, by accident, or more probably by the Providence of God, become adapted to the curious and complicated interests of the British Empire, and had enjoyed a degree of stability unknown to free institutions in any former age, and, therefore, nothing could be more rash or culpable than to run the risk of destroying so venerable a fabric, under which so much practical benefit had been experienced, in the pursuit of imaginary, and hitherto unattainable perfection.

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never before been witnessed in the British empire.[1] And thus, at the very time that the French nobility, by yielding to the demand for concession, and surrendering all their privileges, brought on the Revolution in that country, the British aristocracy, by steadily resisting innovation, prevented it in theirs: a memorable example to succeeding ages, of the effect of firmness and decision on the part of Parliament in stilling the violence of popular agitation, and checking the growth of democratic ambition; and a proof how different the clamour of the press, of public meetings, and popular orators, is from the sober judgment of the British people.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 153—165. Parl. Hist. xxx. p. 787, 923—925.

Bill against Correspondence with France, and Prosecutions for Sedition and Treason.

As the agitation of the Jacobin Clubs, however, still continued, and societies, in imitation of the Parent Institution in Paris, were rapidly forming in all the great towns of the kingdom, a bill against correspondence with France was passed by Parliament, notwithstanding the utmost resistance by the opposition, and prosecutions commenced both in Scotland and England against the most violent of the demagogues. Some of them were clearly necessary; the expedience of others, especially in Scotland, was more than doubtful. Those vindictive measures on the part of government are seldom really beneficial, which excite the sympathy of the humane as well as the turbulent, and convert the transient ebullition of popular feeling into the lasting bitterness of political hatred.[2] The true course in periods of public excitement, is firmness without severity; decided resistance to needless innovation, but cautious abstinence from individual oppression.

[2] Parl. Debates, xxx. p. 615, 620.

Preparations for War, by Great Britain and the Allies.

The internal tranquillity of the British empire being thus provided for, the government took the most vigorous measures which the limited extent of

their military resources would permit, to strengthen the grand army on the Continent. A corps, consisting of 20,000 English, was embarked, and landed in Holland, under the command of the Duke of York, and being united to 10,000 Hanoverians and Hessians, formed a total of 30,000 men in the British pay. The French Convention, early in the year, had ordered a levy of 300,000 men; but these troops could not come into action till April. The present forces of the Allies consisted of 365,000 men, acting on the whole circumference of France, from Calais to Bayonne, while those of the Republicans amounted to 270,000, for the most part of inferior quality, but possessing the advantages of unity of language, government, and public feeling, besides the important circumstance of acting in an interior and concentric circle, which enabled one corps rapidly to communicate with, and support another, while the troops of the Allies, scattered over a much larger circumference, were deprived of that advantage. [1] *

20th April 1793.

24th Feb. 1793.

1 Jom. vi. 49, 52.

* The relative strength of the forces on opposite sides in July, 1793, was as follows:—

ALLIES.	
Imperialists in Belgium,	50,000
Austrians on the Rhine,	40,000
On the Meuse,	33,000
Prussians in Belgium,	12,000
Prussians and Saxons on the Rhine,	65,000
Dutch,	20,000
English, Hanoverians, and Hessians,	30,000
Austrians and Piedmontese, in Piedmont,	45,000
Spaniards,	50,000
Forces of the Empire and Emigrants,	20,000
Total,	365,000

FRENCH.	
In Belgium and Holland,	30,000
Before Maestricht and in the Limbourg,	70,000

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The impression made at St Petersburg by the execution of Louis was fully as vivid as at London: already it was evident that those two capitals were the centres of the great contest which was approaching. No sooner did the melancholy intelligence reach the Empress Catherine, than she instantly took the most decisive measures: all Frenchmen were ordered to quit her territories within three weeks, if they did not renounce the principles of the Revolution, and all correspondence with their relations in that country: and it was publicly announced, that the great fleet of Cronstadt, with forty thousand men on board, should, early in spring, unite itself to the British navy, to pursue measures in common against the enemies of humanity.[1]

Effect of the death of Louis at St Petersburg.

[1] Hard. ii. 191, 192.

The efforts of the Czarine had been incessant and energetic to organize an alliance capable of restraining the progress of revolutionary principles: with that view she had restrained the uplifted arm of conquest over Gustavus III. of Sweden in 1790; and hardly were his troops disengaged from their Turkish enemies, on the banks of the Danube, by the peace of Jassy in 1792, than she made arrangements for transporting the Moscovite legions to the heart of Germany. Nor did these energetic resolutions evaporate in mere

Treaty between England and Russia.

On the Moselle,	25,000
At Mayence,	45,000
On the Upper Rhine,	30,000
In Savoy and Nice,	40,000
In the Interior,	30,000
Total,	270,000

The French, however, had the superiority in the field till the end of April; from that time till the end of August, the Allies had the advantage; after which, from the great levies of the Republicans coming forward, they resumed the ascendency, which went on continually increasing till the close of the campaign, and was never lost till the memorable campaign of 1799.—JOMINI, iii. 51, 52, 53.

empty words, on the part either of the cabinet of St Petersburg or St James. An intimate and confidential correspondence immediately commenced between Count Woronzoff, the Russian ambassador at London, and Lord Grenville, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which terminated in a treaty between the two powers, signed in London on the 25th March. By this convention, which laid the basis of the grand alliance which afterwards brought the war to a glorious termination, it was provided that the two powers should "employ their respective forces, as far as circumstances shall permit, in carrying on the just and necessary war in which they find themselves engaged against France; and they reciprocally engage not to lay down their arms without restitution of all the conquests, which France may have made upon either of the respective powers, or upon such other states or allies to whom, by common consent, they shall extend the benefit of this treaty." They agreed, also, to shut their ports against France, and not permit the export of any naval stores to that power, "and to unite all their efforts to prevent other powers not implicated in this war from giving, on this occasion of common concern to every civilized state, any protection whatever, in consequence of their neutrality, to the commerce or property of the French, on the sea, or in the ports of France." The existing commercial treaties were, at the same time, by a separate convention, ratified and confirmed between the two powers.[1]

[1] Parl. Hist. xxx. 1032, and Hard. ii. 198.

Shortly after, a similar convention was entered into between Great Britain and Sardinia, by which the former power was to receive an annual subsidy of L. 200,000 a-year during the whole continuance of the war, and the latter to keep on foot an army of fifty thousand men; and the English government en-

25th April 1793. And with Sardinia, Prussia, Naples, and Spain.

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gaged to procure for it entire restitution of its dominions as they stood at the commencement of the war; and, by another convention, signed at Aranjuez on the 25th of May, they engaged not to make peace, till they had obtained full restitution for the Spaniards "of all places, towns, and territories which belonged to them at the commencement of the war, and which the enemy may have taken during its continuance." A similar convention was concluded with the court of the two Sicilies, and with Prussia, in which the clauses, prohibiting all exportation to France, and preventing the trade of neutrals with it, are the same as in the Russian treaty. Treaties of the same tenor were concluded in the course of the summer with the Emperor of Germany and the King of Portugal. There was all Europe arrayed in a great league against Republican France, and thus did the regicides of that country, as the first fruits of their cruel triumph, find themselves excluded from the pale of civilized nations. It will appear in the sequel, how many, and what unheard of disasters broke up this great confederacy: how courageous some were in adhering to their engagements: how weak and dastardly others were in deserting them; and how firmly and nobly Great Britain alone persevered to the end, and never laid down her arms till she had accomplished all the objects of the war, and fulfilled to the very letter all the obligations she had contracted to any ever the humblest of the allied powers.[1]

25th May.

12th July.

14th July.

30th August 1793.

26th Sept.

[1] Parl. Hist. xxx. 1032, 1034, 1048, 1058.

Secret designs of Russia.

But while all Europe thus resounded with the note of military preparation against France, Russia had other and more interested designs in view. Amidst the general consternation at the triumphs of the French republicans, Catherine conceived that she would be permitted to pursue, without molestation, her

ambitious designs against Poland. She constantly represented the disturbances in that kingdom as the fruit of revolutionary propagandism, which it was indispensable to crush in the first instance; and it was easy to see that it was for the banks of the Vistula, not the Seine, that her military preparations were, in the first instance at least, directed. The ambitious views of Prussia were also, as will fully appear in the sequel, strongly turned in the same direction; and thus in the very outset of a war which required the concentrated effort of all Europe, and might by such an effort have been speedily brought to a successful termination, were the principal powers already distracted by separate interests, and unjustifiable projects of individual agrandizement.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 198, 199.

Nor was it only the ambitious projects of Russia and Prussia against the independence of Poland, which already gave a gloomy augury as to the issue of the war. Its issue was more immediately affected by the jealousy of Austria and Prussia, which now broke out in the most undisguised manner, and occasioned such a division of the allied forces, as effectually prevented any cordial or effective co-operation existing between them. The Prussian cabinet, mortified at the lead which the Imperial generals took in the common operations, insisted upon the formation of two independent German armies; one composed of Prussians, the other of Austrians, to which the forces of all the minor states should be joined: those of Saxony, Hanover, and Hesse being grouped round the standards of Prussia; those of Bavaria, Wirtemberg, Swabia, the Palatinate, and Franconia, following the double-headed eagles of Austria. By this means, all unity of action between the two grand allied armies was broken up at the very time when it was most required, to

Divisions between the Prussians and Austrians.

CHAP. XI. 1793.

meet the desperate and concentrated energy of a revolutionary state; while the zeal of all the minor states was irretrievably cooled at finding themselves thus parcelled out between the two great military powers, whose pre-eminence already gave them so much disquietude, and compelled against their will to serve under the standards of empires from whom many of them apprehended greater danger than from the common enemy.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 200, 202.

Wretched state of the French.

But though such seeds of weakness existed among the allied powers, the immediate danger was to all appearance much greater to France. Though their armies in Flanders were, in the commencement of the campaign, superior to those of the Allies, they were in the most deplorable state of insubordination, and miserably deficient in every species of equipment. The artillery horses had in great part perished during the severity of a winter campaign; the clothing of the soldiers was worn out; their spirit had disappeared during the license of Republican conquest. The disorganization was complete in every department; the artillery stores, the commissariat, the cavalry horses, were deficient; discipline was awanting among the soldiers, concord among the chiefs. France then experienced the weakness arising from Revolutionary license: she regained her strength under the stern despotism of the Reign of Terror.[2]

[2] Toul. iii. 239. Jomini, iii. 49, 52.

Prince Cobourg Generalissimo.

Prince Cobourg was appointed generalissimo of the Allied Armies from the Rhine to the German Ocean. The great abilities displayed by Clairfait in repairing the disasters of the preceding campaign, pleaded in vain for his continuance in the command at a court not yet taught by disaster to disregard influence and promote only merit. His successor had served under the Imperial banners against the Turks, and shared in

the glories of the campaigns of Suwarrow. But the Austrian commander was far from possessing the vigour or capacity of the conqueror of Ismael. Adhering with obstinate perseverance to the system of dividing his forces, and covering an immense tract of country with communications, he frittered away the vast army placed at his disposal, and permitted the fairest opportunity ever offered, of striking a decisive blow against the rising Republic, to pass away without any important event.[1] He belonged to the old methodical school of Lacey; was destitute of either decision or character; and, from the tardiness of his operations, was the general of all others least qualified to combat the fire and energy of a Revolution.

[1] Jom. iii. 62. Hard. ii. 204, 205.

Vast efforts of France.

To support the prodigious expense of a war on all their frontiers, and on so great a scale, would greatly have exceeded the ordinary and legitimate resources of the French government. But, contrary alike to precedent and anticipation, they derived from the miseries and convulsions of the Revolution the means of new and unparalleled resources. The expenditure of 1792, covered by taxes, the sale of ecclesiastical property and patriotic gifts, amounted to 958,000,000 francs, or about L. 40,000,000 sterling; but the expense of the last period of the year was at the rate of 200,000,000 francs, or L. 8,000,000 a month. But the period was now arrived when all calculation in matters of finance was to cease; for all exigencies, the inexhaustible mine of assignats, possessing a forced circulation, and issued on the credit of the national domains, proved sufficient. When any want was felt in the treasury, the demands were paid by a fresh issue of paper; and this fictitious currency, the source of boundless private ruin in France, sustained singly, during the first years of the Revolutionary wars, the

CHAP. XI. 1793. public credit. In his Finance Report for 1793, Cambon declared that the expenses of that year could admit of no exact calculation; but that the nation must rise superior to its financial, as it had already risen above its military difficulties; and therefore he proposed the immediate issue of 800,000,000 francs, or upwards of L. 33,000,000 in assignats, on the security of the national domains, which was immediately agreed to. These domains he valued at eight milliards, or about L. 350,000,000 sterling; of which three milliards, or L. 130,000,000, had been consumed or impledged by previous issues—an extraordinary proof of the length to which the confiscation of private property had already been carried under the Revolutionary government.[1]

[1] Toul. iii. 248, 250.

To meet the exigencies of the year in the British Parliament, Mr Pitt proposed a loan of L. 4,500,000, besides the ordinary supplies of the year, the interest of which was provided for by additional taxes; and subsidies were granted to the King of Sardinia, and several of the smaller German powers. At the same time, an issue of L. 5,000,000 was voted to relieve the commercial embarrassment consequent on the breaking out of the war; and such was the effect of this well-timed supply, that credit was speedily restored, and little, if any, of this large sum ultimately lost to the state,[2]—a striking example of the beneficial effect of liberal support by government, even in the darkest periods of public suffering.

[2] Parl. Hist. xxx. 972.

Designs of Dumourier;

In January 1793, Dumourier came to Paris, in order to endeavour to rouse the Girondist party to save the life of Louis. This movement, while it failed in its object of preserving the King, for ever alienated the Jacobins from the general.[3] The consequences of

[3] Jom. iii. 57. Pum. iii. 352.

this misunderstanding were important upon the future fate of the campaign.

Dumourier's plan, which he had been meditating during the whole winter, was to commence operations by an invasion of Holland; to revolutionize that country, unite it with the provinces of Flanders, as was since done in 1814, raise an army of eighty thousand men, and with this force move upon Paris, and, without the aid of any other power, dictate laws to the Convention, and restore tranquillity to France. It is one of the most extraordinary signs of those days of Revolution and confusion, that so wild a project should have been seriously undertaken by a man of his acute understanding.[1]

[1] Dum. iv. 14.

And of the Allied Generals.

On the other hand, the project of the Allies was to drive the Republicans beyond the Meuse, and disengage the important fortress of Maestricht; next invest and regain the city of Mentz, the key of the Rhine, and then unite their victorious forces for the deliverance of Flanders. The design, in general, was well conceived; but the details prescribed for the recovery of the Low Countries were tainted by that division of force, which so long proved ruinous to the Allied Armies.[2]

[2] Jom. iii. 64.

Feb. 5, 1793.

To carry into execution his project, Dumourier, early in the season, collected a body of about twenty thousand men at Antwerp, with a view to an attack on Rotterdam. Shortly after, his troops entered the Dutch territory, and established themselves between Breda and Bergen-op-zoom. At first his efforts were attended with unlooked-for success; after a siege of three days, and when the French were on the point of retiring for want of ammunition, Breda, with a garrison of twenty-five hundred men, capitulated. This success was speedily followed by the reduction of Ger-

Feb. 17.

CHAP. XI. 1793. truydenberg, after a trifling resistance; and siege was immediately laid to Williamstadt. The French forces, encamped in straw huts on the shores of the branch of the sea called the Brisbos, were only waiting for the collection of boats, sufficient to convey across the troops, in order to undertake the siege of Dort, when information was received by the General, on the night of the 8th March, of events in other quarters of Flanders, which immediately led to the abandonment of this ill-conceived enterprise.[1]

March 3.

[1] Jom. iii. 85. Touk iii. 262. Dum. iv. 4.

While Dumourier was absent with part of his forces in Holland, Miranda was prosecuting the siege of Maestricht, though with forces totally inadequate to so great an undertaking, But while the French were still reposing in fancied security in their cantonments, the Imperialists were taking active measures to raise the siege. Fifty-two thousand men had been assembled under Prince Coburg, with whom was the young ARCHDUKE CHARLES at the head of the grenadiers. On the 1st and 2d March, the Austrians, along the whole line, attacked the French cantonments, and after an inconsiderable resistance, succeeded in driving them back, and in many points throwing them into utter confusion. The discouragement which has so often been observed to seize the French troops on the first considerable reverse, got possession of the soldiers; whole battalions fled in confusion into France; officers quitted their troops, soldiers disbanded from their officers; the siege of Maestricht was raised, the heavy artillery sent back in haste towards Brussels, and the army driven in disorder beyond the Meuse, with the loss of seven thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. On the 4th March, the Republicans were again routed near Liege, and a large portion of the heavy artillery abandoned under that city;

Archduke Charles joins the Army.

Repeated disasters of the Republicans.

March 2d and 3d.

CHAP. XI. 1793.

a few days after, Tongres was carried by the Archduke Charles, at the head of twelve thousand men; and the whole army fell back upon Terlemont, and thence to Louvain, where Dumourier arrived from the Dutch frontier, and resumed the command. The Austrians then desisted from the pursuit, satisfied with their first success, and not deeming themselves sufficiently strong to force the united corps of the French army in that city.[1]

March 6. March 8.

[1] Toul. iii. 270. Jom. iii. 86, 94, 99. Ib. iii. 96, 99.

The intelligence of these repeated disasters produced the utmost sensation in the whole of Flanders. The Republican party, already disgusted with the exactions and plunder of the French commissioners, now found themselves threatened with the immediate vengeance of their sovereign, and chastisement from the Allied forces. The decree of the Convention, uniting the Flemish provinces to the French Republic, had excited the utmost discontent in the whole country; the spoliation of the churches, forced requisitions, imprisonments, and abuses of every kind, which had gone on during the winter, had roused such a universal spirit of resistance, that a general insurrection was hourly expected, and a body of ten thousand peasants had already assembled in the neighbourhood of Ghent, and defeated the detachments of the garrison of that city which had been sent against them.[2]

Great sensation produced by them in Flanders.

[2] Dum. iv. 66. 72. Toul. iii. 272.

To endeavour to remedy these disorders, and restore the shaken attachment of the Flemings, was the first care of Dumourier. For this purpose he had a conference at Louvain, shortly after his arrival, with Camus, and the other Commissioners of the Convention, but it ended in nothing but mutual recriminations. Dumourier reproached them with having authorized and permitted the exactions and disorders which had caused such a ferment in the conquered provinces; and

Efforts of Dumourier.

CHAP. XI. 1793. they retaliated by accusing him of entertaining designs subversive of the liberty of the people. It concluded thus: "General," said Camus, "you are accused of wishing to become Cæsar: could I feel assured of it, I would act the part of Brutus, and stab you to the heart."—"My dear Camus," replied he, "I am neither Cæsar, nor you Brutus; and the menace you have uttered, is, to me, a passport to immortality."[1]

[1] Dum. iv. 67. 72.

March 13. Dumourier found the army, which, notwithstanding the detachment of twenty thousand men in Holland, twelve thousand at Namur, and five thousand in another direction, was still forty-five thousand strong, including four thousand five hundred cavalry, in the utmost state of disorganization; the confusion of defeat having been superadded to that of Republican license. He immediately reorganized it in a different manner, and, in order to restore the confidence of the soldiers, resolved to commence offensive operations. In a few days, the French advanced guard defeated the Austrians near Tirlemont, with the loss of twelve hundred men; an event which immediately restored confidence to the whole army, and confirmed the General in his resolution to risk a general action.[2]

[2] Dum. iv. 74, 80, 81.

The Austrians had thirty-nine thousand men, of whom nine thousand were horse, posted near Tirlemont. Resolved not to decline a combat, they concentrated their forces along a position, about two leagues in length, near the village of NERWINDE.

Battle of Nerwinde. The left, commanded by the Archduke Charles, was posted across the *chaussée* leading to Tirlemont; the right, under the orders of Clairfait, extended towards Landau; the centre, in two lines, was under the command of General Colloredo and the Prince of Wirtemberg. On the other hand, the French army was di-

March 18. vided into eight columns; three of which, under Va-

lence, were destined to attack the right; two, under the Duke of Chartres, to force the centre; and three, under Miranda, to overwhelm the left. The action began by an attack on the Austrian left, by the troops under the command of Miranda, which advanced in dense columns, and at first succeeded in carrying the villages immediately in front of their position; but the Austrians having directed a severe and concentric fire of artillery on that point, the advance of the masses was checked, and disorder and irresolution introduced into their ranks. Meanwhile, the village of Nerwinde was occupied by the Republicans in the centre, but shortly after regained by the Austrians, and after being frequently taken and retaken, it was finally evacuated by the French, who were unable to sustain the severe and incessant fire of the Imperial artillery. Dumourier formed his line a hundred yards in rear of the village, when the Austrians immediately assailed the infantry by two columns of cuirassiers; but the first was repulsed by the murderous fire of grape from the French artillery; and the second checked, after a severe engagement, by the Republican cavalry. The combat now ceased on the right and centre, but on the left affairs had taken a very different turn. The French, under Miranda, there endeavoured in vain to debouche from the villages which they had occupied; the heads of their columns, as fast as they presented themselves, were swept off by the fire of the Austrian artillery, placed on the heights immediately behind; and shortly after, the Archduke Charles, at the head of two battalions, stormed the villages; and Prince Cobourg, perceiving this to be the important point, attacked the French columns, with a large body of cavalry and infantry, under the Duke of Wirtemberg, in flank, while the

Defeat of the French.

Prince Cobourg's despatch.

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Archduke pressed their front. The result was, that the French right wing was routed, and would have been totally destroyed, had the Duke of Wirtemberg charged with the whole forces under his command, instead of the inconsiderable part which achieved this important success. The Republicans, however, alarmed at this disaster, retired from the field of battle, and regained, with some difficulty, the ground they had occupied before the engagement.[1]

[1] Dum. iv. 88, 90, 97. Jom. iii. 105, 111. 113. Toul. iii. 279, 288, 290.

In this battle, the Austrians lost two thousand men, and the French two thousand five hundred killed and wounded, and fifteen hundred prisoners, but it decided the fate of the campaign. Dumourier, aided by the young Duke of Chartres, conducted the retreat in the evening with much ability, and in good order, without being seriously disquieted by their enemies. A few days after the Austrians advanced, and on the 22d, under cover of a thick mist, made an unexpected attack on the French rear-guard; but they were repulsed, after a trifling success, with loss.[2]

[2] Dum. iv. 101. Jom. iii. 117, 121. Toul. iii. 292-3.

Disorganization of the French Army.

The position of the French commander, however, was now extremely critical. To conduct a long retreat with discouraged troops, in the face of a victorious enemy, is at all times dangerous; but it was in an especial manner so at that juncture, in consequence of the undisciplined state of a large part of his forces, and the undisguised manner in which the volunteers left their colours upon the first serious reverses. The National Guards openly declared that they had taken up arms to save their country, not to get themselves massacred in Belgium; and whole companies and battalions, with their arms and baggage, went off in a body towards the French frontier. To such a height did the discouragement arrive, that within a few days after the battle, six thousand men left their

colours, and disbanded, spreading dismay over all the roads, leading to France. Naturally brave and active, the French troops are the best in the world to advance and gain conquests ; but they have not, till inured by discipline and experience, the steadiness requisite to preserve them ; and by the threatened defection of the volunteer corps, Dumourier was exposed to the loss of more than half his army, while the open plains of Flanders, now destitute of fortified places, offered no points of defence capable of arresting the progress of a victorious army.[1]

[1] Jom. iii. 125. Dum. iv. 98, 102, 103. 115.

Retreat of Dumourier.

Influenced by these considerations, the French General everywhere prepared for a retreat. Orders were despatched to General Harville, to throw a garrison of two thousand men into the citadel of Namur, and move with the remainder of his corps, consisting of twelve thousand men, towards Brussels, while the troops advanced, by the imprudent invasion of Holland, as far as Gertruydenberg and Breda, were directed to retire upon Antwerp and Mechlin. Prince Cobourg in vain urged the Dutch and Prussian troops to disquiet their retreat ; contenting themselves with investing Breda and Gertruydenberg, they remained, with a force of thirty thousand men, in a state of perfect inaction.[2]

[2] Jom. iii. 121. Dum. iv. 104, 105.

Conferences with Prince Cobourg.

Shortly after conferences were opened between Dumourier and the Austrian Generals, in virtue of which, it was agreed that the French should retire behind Brussels, without being disquieted in their retreat. It soon appeared how essential such an arrangement was to the Republican arms. On the following day, Clairfait, who was ignorant of the convention, attacked General Lamarche, who fell back in confusion behind Louvain, and left an opening in the retreating columns, which, with a more enterprising enemy, might

March 23.

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have been attended with ruinous results. The troops then gave themselves up to despair, and openly threatened to disband; a striking proof of the little reliance that can be placed on any but regular and disciplined soldiers, during the vicissitudes of fortune, unavoidable in war. Dumourier himself has confessed, that his troops were in such a state of disorder, that, if vigorously pressed, they must have been totally annihilated in the long retreat which lay before them, before they regained the French frontiers; and yet so ignorant was the Austrian commander of the condition of his adversary, that he was unaware of a state of debility, confusion, and weakness, which was notorious to every peasant who beheld his retreating column.[1]

[1] Dum. iv. 109, 111. Jom. iii. 126, 127. Hard. ii. 241, 215.

25th and 26th March.

In virtue of the convention, the French army, without farther delay, evacuated Brussels, and Mechlin, and retired in good order, by Hall, Mons, and Ath, towards the French frontier. At the same time, the Republicans retired along the whole line from Gertruydenberg to Namur, and withdrew the garrison from the citadel of the latter place.[2]

[2] Toul. iii. 295.

But it soon appeared, that in these movements Dumourier had more than mere military objects in view. It was at Ath, on the 27th March, that the first conference of a political nature took place, and it was verbally agreed between the French commander and Colonel Mack, on the part of the Imperialists, "That the French army should repose a little at Mons and Tournay without being disquieted, and that Dumourier, who was to judge of the proper time for marching to Paris, should regulate the movements of the Austrians, who were to act only as auxiliaries, that if he could not, by his single forces, effect the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, he should fix

upon the amount of the Allied Forces which he would require: and that the fortress of Condé should be placed in the hands of the Imperialists as a guarantee, to be restored to France after a general peace."[1] CHAP. XI. 1793. [1] Hard. ii. 217, 218. Jom. iii. 132.

Having thus embarked in the perilous undertaking of overturning the republican, and establishing a monarchical government, Dumourier's first care was to secure the fortresses upon which the success of his enterprise depended. But here his ill fortune began. The officer whom he despatched to take possession of Lisle, suffered himself to be made the dupe of the commander of that place, and led a prisoner into the fortress; the garrisons of Condé and Valenciennes successfully resisted his attempts to bring them over to the constitutional party; and the Convention taking the alarm, despatched Camus, and three other commissioners, with the Minister at War, Bournonville, with orders to the General to appear at the bar of the Convention, and answer for his conduct. After an angry discussion, Dumourier arrested the deputies, and delivered them over to the Austrians; but he was speedily deserted by his own soldiers, and obliged to fly from his camp at St Amand, and take refuge, with fifteen hundred followers, in the Austrian lines.[2] Failure and Flight of Dumourier. [2] Toul. iii. 308. Jom. iii. 135, 137.

Restrained either by a sense of honour, arising from the recent convention, or by the inherent slowness of their disposition, the Austrians made no attempt to improve the opportunity afforded by the defection of the French commander. The Republicans were permitted quietly to retire into Valenciennes, Lisle, and Condé; a considerable number formed an intrenched camp at Famars, where, by orders of the Convention, General Dampierre assumed the command, and sedulously endeavoured to restore the discipline and revive April 5.

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the spirit which so many disasters had severely weakened among the soldiers.[1]

[1] Toul. iii. 319.

The failure of the attempt of Dumourier having convinced Prince Cobourg that nothing was now to be made of the Republicans but by force of arms, all the efforts of the Allied Powers were at last directed to this object.

Congress at Antwerp to decide on the measures for the war.

A Congress was assembled at Antwerp of the ministers of the Allied Powers, which was attended by Count Metternich* and Stahrenberg on the part of Austria, Lord Auckland on that of England, and Count Keller on that of Prussia. Such was the confidence inspired by recent events, that these ministers all imagined that the last days of the Convention were at hand: and in truth they were so, if they had communicated a little more vigour and unanimity into the military operations. Inspired by these ideas, and irritated at the total failure of Dumourier's attempt to subvert the anarchical rule in that country, the plenipotentiaries came to the resolution of totally altering the object of the war, and the necessity was now openly announced of providing *indemnities and securities* for the allied powers; in other words, partitioning the frontier territories of France among the invading states. The effect of this resolution was immediately conspicuous in a proclamation which Prince Cobourg issued to the French, in which he openly disavowed on the part of his government, those resolutions to abstain from all aggrandizements which he had announced only a few days before, and declared that he was ordered to prosecute the contest by force of arms with all the forces at his disposal.† The ef-

* Father of the great statesman of the same name of the present day.

† In his first proclamation on 5th April, composed during the con-

fects of this unhappy resolution were soon apparent. When Valenciennes and Condé were taken, the standard, not of Louis XVII., but of Austria, was hoisted on the walls, and the allied ministers already talked openly of indemnities for the past, and securities for the future. No step in the early stages of the war was ever attended with more unfortunate consequences: it at once changed the character of the contest: converted it from one of liberation into one of aggrandize- CHAP. XI. 1793.

ferences with Dumourier, Cobourg declared, "Desirous only of securing the prosperity and glory of a country, torn by so many convulsions, I declare that I shall support, with all the forces at my disposal, the generous and beneficent intentions of General Dumourier and his brave army. I declare that our only object is to restore to France its constitutional monarch, with the means of rectifying such experienced abuses as may exist, and to give to France as to Europe, peace, confidence, tranquillity, and happiness. In conformity with these principles, I declare on my word of honour, that I enter on the French territory without any intention of making conquests, but solely and entirely for the above-mentioned purposes. I declare also on my word of honour, that, if military operations should lead to any place of strength being placed in my hands, I shall regard it in no other light than as a *sacred deposit;* and I bind myself in the most solemn manner to restore it to the government which may be established in France, or as soon as the brave general with whom I make common cause shall demand it." These are the principles of the true anti-revolutionary war; but they were strangely departed from in the proclamation issued a few days later by the same general, after the determination of the Congress at Antwerp had been taken. Prince Cobourg there said,—"The proclamation of the 5th instant was the expression only of my *personal* sentiments; and I there manifested my *individual* views for the safety and tranquillity of France. But now that the results of that declaration have proved so different from what I anticipated, the same candour obliges me to declare that the state of hostility between the Emperor and the French nation is unhappily re-established in its full extent. It remains for me, therefore, only *to revoke my said declaration*, and to announce that I shall prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. Nothing remains binding of my first proclamation, but the declaration which I renew with pleasure, that the strictest discipline shall be observed by my troops in all parts of the French territory which they may occupy." Stronger evidence of the unhappy change of systems cannot be imagined.—See Hardenberg, ii. 231, 233, 241, 243.

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ment, and gave the Jacobins of Paris too good reason for their assertion, that the dismemberment of the country was at hand, and that all true citizens must join heart in hand in resisting the common enemy. The true principle to have adopted would have been that so strongly recommended by Mr Burke, and which afterwards proved so successful in the hands of Alexander and Wellington, viz. to have separated distinctly and emphatically the cause of France from that of the Jacobin faction who had enthralled it: to have guaranteed the integrity of the former, and denounced implacable hostility only against the latter, and thus afforded the means to the great body of patriotic citizens who were adverse to the sanguinary rule of the Convention, of extricating themselves at once from domestic tyranny and foreign subjugation.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 238, 241. Burke, Reg. Peace.

The British contingent, twenty thousand strong, having landed at Rotterdam, the Allied Army, under his immediate command, was raised to above ninety thousand men, besides a detached corps of thirty thousand Austrians, stationed at Namur, Luxembourg, and Treves, to keep the communication with the Prussian army destined to act against Mayence.[2]

[2] Jom. iii. 146. Toul. iv. 4.

Alarmed at the great peril they had sustained by the defection of Dumourier, the Convention took the most vigorous measures to provide for the public safety. A camp of forty thousand men was ordered to form a reserve for the army; the levy of 300,000 men, ordered by the decree of 24th February, was directed to be hastened, and sixty representatives of the Convention named, to serve as viceroys over the generals in all the armies. No less than twelve of these haughty Republicans were commanded to proceed to the army of the North. No limit existed to their authority; armed with the despotic powers of the Con-

Conquest of Austrian Flanders by the Allies.

vention, supported by a Republican and mutinous soldiery, they, with equal facility, placed the generals on a triumphal car, or despatched them to the scaffold. Disposing with absolute sway of the lives and arms of several millions of Frenchmen, they were staggered by no losses, intimidated by no difficulties; to press on, and bear down opposition by the force of numbers, was the system on which they invariably acted, and disposing with an unsparing hand of the blood of a nation in arms, they found resources for the maintenance of such a murderous system of warfare, which never could have been commanded by any regular government.[1] CHAP. XI. 1793.

[1] Jom. iii. 151.

While these disastrous events were occurring on the northern, fortune was not more propitious to the arms of the Republic on its eastern frontier. The forces of the French in that quarter, at the opening of the campaign, were greatly overmatched by those of the Allies; between the Prussians and Austrians, there were not less than seventy-five thousand men on the Rhine in February, besides twenty thousand between Treves and the Meuse; while Custine had only forty-five thousand in the field, including twenty-two thousand under his immediate command, the remainder being stationed on the Meuse; and the whole forces on the Upper Rhine, including the garrisons, did not exceed forty thousand, of whom not more than a half were available to service in the field. The campaign was opened after some inconsiderable actions, on the 24th March, by the King of Prussia crossing the Rhine in great force at Rheinfels. An ineffectual resistance was attempted by the army of Custine, but the superiority of the Allied Forces compelled him to fall back, and after some days' retreat, and several partial actions, he retired first to Landau, and thence behind

Defeats on the Rhine of Custine's Projects.

March 24.

CHAP. XI. 1793. the river Lauter, and took post in the famous lines of Weissenberg. Mentz was now left to its own resources, with a great train of heavy artillery, and a garrison of twenty thousand men; while Custine, whose force was augmented by the garrisons in Alsace to thirty-five thousand men, remained strictly on the defensive in the Vosges mountains and his fortified position.[1]

March 31.

[1] Toul. iii. 322, 325. Jom. iii. 187, 202, 205.

Siege of Mayence.

The Allies immediately made preparations for the siege of this great fortress; but, by an inconceivable fatuity, the superb siege equipage, which was on the road from Austria, was sent on to Valenciennes, while the supplies requisite for the attack on Mayence were brought from Holland, an exchange which occasioned great delays in both sieges, and proved extremely injurious to the future progress of the Allied arms. The garrison, though so numerous, were not furnished with the whole artillery requisite for arming the extensive works; but their spirit was excellent, and the most vigorous resistance was to be anticipated. Little progress took place in the operations during the first two months, and on the 17th May, a general attack was made on the covering force by Custine's army, supported by fourteen thousand men from the corps of the Moselle, under General Houchard; but the movements of the troops were ill combined, part of them were seized with a disgraceful panic, and the attack proved entirely abortive. After this failure, Custine was removed to the command of the Army of the North, now severely pressed by the Allied Forces near Valenciennes; and the forces in the lines of Weissenberg remained under the orders of Beauharnois, without attempting any thing of importance till a later period of the campaign.[2] The inactivity and irresolution of the allies in these operations, and the little advantage which they derived from their superiority of force,

May 17. "

Defeat of the Attack on the Covering Army.

[2] Toul. iv. 15, 16. Jom. iii. 209, 213, 225. Hard. ii. 257, 258, 259, 298.

and the wretched condition of their opponents, proves how grievously they stood in need of a leader capable of conducting such a contest. CHAP XI. 1793.

Meanwhile, the operations of the siege, long delayed from the tardiness in the approach of the heavy train, were at length pushed with activity. Trenches having been regularly constructed, fifteen batteries were armed on the 1st July, and a heavy fire from above two hundred pieces of cannon opened upon the body of the place, the garrison of which, after a blockade of two months, began to be severely straitened for provisions. On the 16th, a great magazine of forage took fire, and was consumed; and the destruction of several mills augmented the difficulties of the besieged, who now found their great numbers the principal difficulty with which they had to contend. A capitulation, therefore, by which the garrison should be withdrawn to some quarter where their services might be of more value to the Republic, was agreed to, and the 22d July fixed on as the day for its accomplishment.[1] Fall of Mayence. July 1. 1 Jom. iii. 235, 239. Hard. ii. 299, 310.

While this was going on within the city, the army of Beauharnois, urged by repeated orders from the Convention, was at length taking measures for its deliverance. Early in July, the troops broke up from the lines of Weissenberg, and after a variety of tardy movements, a general attack took place on the 19th, on the whole Allied position, over an extent of nearly thirty leagues. But the efforts of the Republicans, feeble and ill-conducted, led to no result, and in the midst of their complicated movements, Mayence surrendered on the 22d. The Duke of Brunswick, rejoiced at finding himself extricated by this event, from a situation which, with more daring adversaries, would have been full of peril, accorded favourable terms to July 22.

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the garrison; they were permitted to march out with their arms and baggage, on condition of not serving against the Allies for a year; a stipulation of ruinous consequences to the Royalist party, as it disengaged seventeen thousand veteran soldiers, who were forthwith sent against the insurgents in La Vendée. The Republicans, finding the city taken, fell back in disorder, and regained the lines of Weissenberg in such confusion, as indicated rather a total rout than an indecisive offensive movement.[1]*

[1] Hard. ii. 296, 319. Jom. iii. 244, 252.

Congress at Antwerp to decide on the Campaign.

While these events were taking place on the Rhine, the war was gradually assuming a more decisive character on the Flemish frontier. The congress having been held at Antwerp for arranging the plan of the campaign, having at length resolved upon the operations which were to be pursued, and the British contingents having joined the line at the end of April, the Archduke Charles entered in triumph into Brussels, the people of which, with the usual inconstancy of the multitude, gave him as flattering a reception as had attended the entrance of the Republicans a few months before. The Allied Generals, however, were far from improving the advantages afforded by the defection of Dumourier, and the extreme dejection of the French army; their forces were not put in motion till the beginning of May, before which the French had so far recovered from their consternation, as to have actually resumed the offensive. Disposing of a splendid army of 120,000 men, Cobourg did nothing

April 25.

* Already it had become evident that the Prussians were secretly inclined towards the French, and that after the capture of Mayence, they would withdraw as soon as they could from the contest. During the siege, a negociation for the exchange of prisoners was established between "the *French Republic* and the King of Prussia;" and such was the temper of the officers, that when the fortress was taken, they caused the Marsellaise Hymn to be sung in the hotels where they lodged.—See Hardenberg, ii. 303–319.

to disquiet the retreat of thirty thousand Republicans, disordered and dejected, to their own frontiers, and allowed them by his extreme tardiness to be reinforced by numerous levies from the interior, before he attempted to follow up his successes.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 246, 251. Jom. iii. 149, 157.

On the 1st May, a general attack was made by General Dampierre on the Allied position; but the Republicans were driven back to their camp at Famars, with the loss of two thousand men and a large quantity of artillery. On the 8th, a more serious action took place; the French attacked the Allies along their whole line, extending to nine leagues, with forces greatly inferior, but they were everywhere unsuccessful except at the wood of Vicogne, where the Prussians were forced back, until the arrival of the English Guards changed the face of affairs. These gallant corps drove back the French with the loss of four thousand men, and re-established the Allies in their position. In this action the brave General Dampierre was killed. This was the first time that the English and French soldiers were brought into collision in the war; little did either party contemplate the terrible contest which awaited them, before it was terminated, within a few miles of the same place, on the plain of Waterloo.[2]

May 1. Republicans forced back to Famars.

May 8.

[2] Jom. iii. 160, 163. Ann. Reg. 1793, p 169. Toul. iv. 6.

These repeated disasters convinced the Republicans of the necessity of remaining on the defensive, and striving only to prevent the siege of those great towns which had been fortified for the protection of the frontier. But the Allies, having now accumulated eighty thousand men in front of Valenciennes, resolved to make a general attack on the intrenched camp which covered that important city. The attack was fixed for the 23d, and was conducted by two grand columns, seconded by several partial demonstrations. The first column consisted of sixteen thousand men, under the

Storming of the Camp at Famars.

CHAP. XI. 1793. Duke of York, the second, of eleven thousand men, was placed under the orders of General Ferrari. A thick fog at first concealed the hostile armies from each other, but soon after daybreak it rose like a curtain, and discovered the Republican troops posted in front of their intrenchments, and defended by a numerous artillery. The English troops under Abercromby, forming part of Ferrari's corps, advanced along with the Germans under Walmoden, crossed the Ronelle, and carried some of the redoubts of the camp, notwithstanding a vehement fire from the French artillery. The attack of the Duke of York having also been followed by the capture of three redoubts, and the whole Allied Army encamped close to the intrenchments, the French resolved not to wait the issue of an assault on the following day, but evacuated their position during the night, and fell back to the famous camp of Cæsar, leaving Valenciennes to its fate.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 10–13. Jom. iii. 165–170. Ann. Reg. 1793. p. 169

The allies on this occasion lost an opportunity of bringing the war to a termination. Cobourg had eighty thousand men in the field: the French had not fifty thousand: had he acted with vigour, and followed up his advantage, he might have destroyed the Republican army, and marched at the head of an irresistible force to Paris. But at that period, neither the allied cabinets nor generals were capable of such a resolution: the former looked only to a war of conquest and acquisition against France, in which the great object was to secure their advantages: the latter to a slow methodical campaign, similar to that pursued in ordinary times against a regular government.[2]

[2] Hard. ii. 286–7.

It was immediately determined by the Allies to form the siege of Valenciennes and Condé. The army of observation, thirty thousand strong, encamped near

Herinnes, fronting Bouchain, while a corps of equal strength under the Duke of York, was intrusted with the conduct of the siege. The garrison, consisting of nine thousand men, made a gallant defence; but the operations of the besiegers were conducted with the greatest activity. On the 14th June, the trenches were opened, and above two hundred and fifty pieces of heavy cannon, with ninety mortars, kept up a vigorous and incessant fire upon the works and the city. Upon the unfortunate inhabitants, the tempest fell with unmitigated severity, and several parts of the town were speedily in flames; but they bore their sufferings with great resignation, till the pangs of hunger began to be added to the terrors of the bombardment. Ultimately the approaches of the besiegers were chiefly supported by their subterraneous operations. During the whole of July, the mines were pushed with the greatest activity, and on the 25th, three great globes of compression were ready to be fired under the covered way, while two columns, the first composed of English, the second of Germans, were prepared to take advantage of the confusion, and assault the ruins. At nine at night the globes were sprung with a prodigious explosion, and the assaulting columns immediately rushed forward with loud shouts, cleared the palisades of the covered way, pursued the Republicans into the interior works, where they spiked the cannon, and dislodged the garrison, but were unable to maintain their ground from the fire of the place. The outworks, however, being now in great part carried, and the consternation of the citizens having risen to the highest pitch, from the prospect of an approaching assault, the governor, on the 28th, was obliged to capitulate. The garrison, now reduced to seven thousand men, marched out with the honours of war, laid down their arms, and

Valenciennes and Condé invested.

Fall of Valenciennes.

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were permitted to retire to France, on condition of not again serving against the Allies. It was employed, like that of Mayence, in the war against the Royalists in La Vendée and Toulon, and there rendered essential service to the Republican arms.[1]

[1] Jomini, iv. 171, 174, 181. Toul. iv. 42, 43.

July 28.

In this siege, the operations on both sides were conducted with great vigour and ability; and the French artillery even surpassed its ancient renown. The Allies threw eighty-four thousand cannon balls, twenty thousand shells, and forty-eight thousand bombs into the town. The governor, General Ferrand, was arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and but for the intervention of a commissioner of the Convention, would have forfeited his life for a defence highly honourable in itself, and which in the end proved the salvation of France, by the time which it afforded for the completion of the armaments in the interior.[2]

Blockade and Capitulation of Condé.

[2] Jom. iii. 181.

13th July.

The siege, or rather blockade of Condé was less distinguished by remarkable events. After an obstinate resistance, it capitulated a short time before Valenciennes, the garrison having exhausted all their means of subsistence. By this event, 3000 men were made prisoners, and an important fortress gained to the Allied Forces.[3]

[3] Toul. iv. 32.

The capitulation of these two fortresses brought to light the fatal change in the object and policy of the war which had been agreed upon in the Congress of Antwerp. All Europe was in anxious suspense, awaiting the official announcement of the intentions of the Allies by the use which they made of their first considerable conquests, when the hoisting of the Austrian colours on their walls too plainly avowed that they were to be retained as permanent acquisitions by the Emperor. This was soon placed beyond a doubt by the proclamation issued by Prince Cobourg on 13th

July 1793, which followed, in which he declared, "I announce by the present proclamation, that I take possession in name of His *Imperial and Royal Majesty*, and that I will accord to all the inhabitants of the *conquered* countries security and protection, hereby declaring that I will not exercise the power conferred upon me by the *Right of Conquest* but for the preservation of the public peace, and the protection of individuals." This was immediately followed by the establishment of an Imperial and Royal Junta at Condé, for the administration of the conquered provinces, in the name of the Emperor, which commenced its operations by dispossessing all the revolutionary authorities, restoring the religious bodies, check- the circulation of assignats, and removing the sequestration from the emigrant estates.[1] CHAP. XI. 1793. [1] Hard. ii. 327, 328.

The public revelation of this unhappy change in the objects of the coalition, was the first rude shock which its fortunes received. It sowed divisions among the Allies, as much as it united its enemies; Prussia now perceived clearly that the war had become one of aggression on the part of Austria, and conceiving the utmost disquietude, at such an augmentation of the power of her dreaded rival, secretly resolved to paralyse all the operations of her armies, now that Mayence, the bulwark of the north of Germany, was regained, and withdraw as soon as decency would permit, from a contest in which success appeared more to be dreaded than defeat. The French emigrants were struck with consternation at so decisive a proof of the intended spoliation of their country; Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII. solemnly protested, as guardian for his nephew, Louis XVII. against any dismemberment of his dominions: placards appeared on all the walls of Brussels, calling on all Frenchmen to

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unite, to save their country from the fate of Poland, to which it was suspected, not without reason, Dumourier was no stranger; while the Convention, turning to the best account this announcement of intended conquest, succeeded in inspiring a degree of unanimity in defence of their country, which they never could have effected had the Allies confined themselves to the orginal objects of the war.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 329, 331.

Custine takes shelter in intrenched Camps.

Custine, removed from the army of the Rhine, was placed in command of the army in Flanders in the end of May. On his arrival at the camp of Cæsar, he found the soldiers in the most deplorable state, both of disorganization and military spirit; a large portion of the older troops had been withdrawn to sustain the war in La Vendée, and their place supplied by young conscripts, almost totally undisciplined, who were shaken by the first appearance of the enemy's squadrons. "He trembled," to use his own words, "at the thought of what might occur, if he followed the example of his predecessors, and made a forward movement before confidence and discipline were re-established among the soldiers." His first care was to issue a severe proclamation, calculated to restore discipline; his next, to use the utmost efforts to revive the spirits of the troops; but, as he was still inferior in number to his opponents, he did not venture, notwithstanding the reiterated orders of the Convention, to make any movement for the relief of the besieged places. Incessantly engaged in teaching the conscripts the rudiments of the military art, he chose to brave the resentment of government, rather than lead them to certain butchery, and probable defeat. His firmness in discharging this important, but perilous duty, proved fatal to himself, but the salvation of France; it habituated an undisciplined crowd to the use of

arms, and preserved, in a period of extreme peril, the nucleus of an army, on which the preservation of the Republic depended. But the Convention, impatient for more splendid achievements, and willing to ascribe every disaster to the fault of the generals, deprived him of the command, and ordered him to Paris to answer for his conduct; where he was soon after de- 23d July. livered over to the Revolutionary Tribunal, condemned, and executed, along with Beauharnois, accused of misconduct, in the attempt to raise the siege of Mayence, whose name the extraordinary fortunes of his widow have rescued from oblivion: cruel and unjust examples, which added to the numerous sins of the Republican government; but by placing its generals in the alternative of victory or death, contributed to augment the fearless energy which led to the subsequent triumphs of the French arms.[1]

[1] Jom. iii. 182, 184, 185. Hard. ii. 343. Toul. iv 44, 45.

Reinforced by the besieging armies, the forces under Prince Cobourg now amounted to above eighty thousand foot, and twenty thousand horse, all ready for action, a force greatly superior to the dispirited and inexperienced troops to which it was opposed. Shut up within the camp of Cæsar, the French army was avowedly unable to keep the field in presence of the Allies. Even this last stronghold they were not long permitted to retain. In the beginning of August, August 8. they were attacked and driven from its trenches, with so much ease, that the rout could hardly be called a battle. The Republicans fled in confusion the moment the Allies appeared in sight; so precipitate was their flight, that, as at the battle of the Spurs, hardly a shot was fired or stroke given, before the whole army was dissolved. After this disaster, the Republicans retreated behind the Scarpe, the last defensible ground in front of Arras; after which there remained neither

Rout in the Camp of Cæsar.

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position to take, nor fortified place to defend, on the road to Paris. The Allies in great force were grouped within one hundred and sixty miles of Paris: fifteen days march would have brought them to its gates. Already Cambray was invested; Chateau Cambresis occupied; a camp formed between Peronne and St Quentin, and the light troops pushed on to Peronne and Bapaume. Irresolution prevailed in the French army, dismay in the capital, everywhere the Republican authorities were taking to flight: the Austrian Generals, encouraged by such extraordinary success, were at length urgent to advance and improve their successes, before the enemy recovered from their consternation; and if they had been permitted to do so, what incalculable disasters would Europe have been spared! We shall see in the subsequent chapter the deplorable division of interests which prevented this early termination of the war; and how deeply Great Britain has cause to regret the narrow and selfish views which prompted the part she took in the transaction.[1]

Desperate condition of the French.

[1] Hård. ii. 348, 349. Toul. iv. 45–49. Ann. Reg. 1793, 191.

We have now arrived at the extreme point of success on the part of the Allies. From this period may be dated a series of disasters, which went on constantly increasing, though with great vicissitudes of fortune, till the French arms were planted on the Kremlin, and all Europe, from Gibraltar to the North Cape, had yielded to their arms. What were the causes which thus raised up the Republic from the lowest point of depression to the highest pitch of glory, will be considered in the next chapter; in the meantime, the events which have been commemorated, are pregnant with useful instruction, both to the soldier and the statesman.

General Reflections on these Events.

1. The first reflection which suggests itself, is the remarkable state of debility of the French Republic

at an early period of its history, and the facility with which, to all appearance, its forces would have yielded to a vigorous and concentrated attack from the Allied Forces. Her armies, during the first three months of the campaign, were defeated in every encounter; a single battle, in which the Republican loss did not exceed four thousand men, occasioned the forfeiture of all Flanders; the frontiers of France itself were invaded with impunity, and the iron barrier broken through, to an extent never accomplished by Marlborough and Eugene, after successive campaigns, at the head of 100,000 men. Her army on the Flemish frontier did not exceed thirty thousand men, and they were in such a state of disorganization, that they could not by any exertions be brought to face the enemy. "The Convention," says Dumourier, "had no other resource; but the army escaped from the camp of Famars to that of Cæsar. Had the Duke of York been detached by Cobourg against the camp of Cæsar, with half his forces, the siege of Valenciennes might have been continued with the other half, and the fate of France sealed in that position."[1] In the darkest days of Louis XIV., France was never placed in such peril, as after the capture of Valenciennes.

[1] Dum. iv. 4. Hard. ii. 289.

2. These considerations are calculated to dispel the popular illusions as to the capability of an enthusiastic population alone, to withstand the attacks of a powerful regular army. Notwithstanding the ardour excited by the successful result of the campaign in 1792, and the conquest of Flanders, the Republican levies were, in the beginning of the following campaign, in such a state of disorganization and weakness, that they were unable to make head against the Austrians in any encounter, and at length remained shut up in intrenched camps, from obvious and admitted inabi-

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lity to keep the field. The enemy by whom they were attacked, were by no means formidable, either from activity or conduct, and yet they were uniformly successful. What would have been the result, had the Allies been conducted with vigour and ability; by a Blucher, a Paskewitch, or a Wellington? By the admission of the Republicans themselves, their forces would have been subdued; the storming of the camp of Cæsar would have decided the fate of France.[1]

[1] Dum. iv.4. Jom. iii. 68.

3. Every thing conspires to indicate the ruinous effects which followed the resolution taken in the Congress at Antwerp to convert the war, heretofore undertaken for the overthrow of the Jacobins, into one of aggression and conquest of France itself. The great objects of the war should have been to have separated the cause of that fearful faction from that of the monarchy, and joined in willing bands to the standards of the Allies, the heroes of La Vendée, and the generous citizens of Lyons. By that resolution they separated them for ever, and at length brought all the hearts of the Republic cordially and sincerely round the tricolor flag. The subsequent disasters of the war: the divisions which paralysed the combined Powers: the unanimity which strengthened the French, may in a great degree be traced to that unhappy deviation from its original principle; and it is remarkable that victory never again was permanently chained to their standards, till, taught by misfortune, they renounced this selfish policy, and recurred, in the great coalition of 1813, to the generous system which had been renounced at Antwerp twenty years before.

4. The important breathing truce which the time occupied in the siege of Valenciennes and Condé afforded to the French, and the immense advantage which they derived from the new levies which they

received, and fresh organization which they acquired during that important period, is a signal proof of the vital importance of fortresses in contributing to national defence. Napoleon has not hesitated to ascribe to the three months thus gained the salvation of France.[1] It is to be constantly recollected, that the Republican armies were then totally unable to keep the field; that behind the frontier fortresses there was neither a defensive position, nor a corps to reinforce them; and that, if driven from their vicinity, the capital was taken, and the war concluded. The successful issue of the invasions of 1814 and 1815 afford no argument against these principles: the case of a million of disciplined men, under consummate leaders, assailing a single state, is not the rule but the exception.

[1] Nap. in las Cases, ii. 327.

Ease with which France might have been conquered if the Allies had held together.

5. The failure of the Allies to take advantage of the debilitated state of their adversaries, is the strongest proof of the erroneous system on which war was then conducted, and the peculiar ignorance which prevailed as to the mode of combating a revolutionary power. To divide a great army into an extensive chain of posts, and thereby lose all the benefit arising from superiority of force, is generally the weakest mode of conducting hostilities; but to do so with antagonists in a state of revolution, is, of all things, the most absurd. Passion is then predominant with the multitude; and how readily is one passion transformed into another; the fervour of ambition into that of fear! By protracting the contest, and conducting the operations on a slow and methodical plan, time is given for the completion of the revolutionary armaments, and the consternation spread among the people by a succession of disasters, allowed to subside. Repeatedly during the early stages of the war, advantages were gained by the Al-

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lies, which, if followed up with tolerable vigour, would have become decisive; as often did subsequent inactivity or caution render them abortive. New and Republican levies, easily elated and rendered formidable by victory, are as rapidly depressed by defeat; it is the quality of regular soldiers alone to preserve their firmness in periods of disaster, and present even after adverse, the intrepidity which recalls prosperous fortune. The system of attack should be suited to the character of the force by which it is opposed; the methodical campaign, indispensable in presence of veteran troops, is the worst that can be adopted with the ardent, but unsteady levies which are brought forward by a Revolutionary State.

Ruinous Effect of the English reduction of Force.

6. The military establishment of 1792, is the never-ceasing theme of eulogium with the economical politicians of the present day, and incessant are the efforts to have the forces of the British Empire again reduced to that diminutive standard. The result of the first period of the campaign of 1793, may demonstrate how shortsighted, even in a pecuniary point of view, are such niggardly projects. Had Great Britain, instead of twenty thousand, been able to have sent sixty thousand English soldiers to the Continent at that period, what results might have been anticipated from their exertions. Forty thousand native English broke the military strength of Napoleon at Waterloo; and what was the military power of France at the commencement of the war, compared to what was there wielded by that dreaded commander? What would have been gained to Britain had the successes of 1815 come in 1793; the camp of Cæsar been the field of Waterloo! How many hundreds of thousands required to be sacrificed; how many hundreds of millions expended, before the vantage-ground then held,

was regained! So true it is, that a nation can never, with safety even to its finances, reduce too low its war-like establishment; that too severe an economy at one time begets too lavish a prodigality at another; and that years of tarnished reputation, and wasteful extravagance, are required to blot out the effects of a single undue pacific reduction.

CHAPTER XII.

WAR IN LA VENDEE.

ARGUMENT.

Origin of the Religious Resistance in La Vendée to the Revolution—Character and aspect of the Country—The Bocage, its peculiar character—Manners of the Inhabitants and the Landlords—Strong Religious Feelings of the People—Discontents excited by the first Severity against the Priests—Previous Conspiracy in Brittany, and abortive attempts at Insurrection—The Levy of 300,000 Men occasions an Insurrection over the whole Country—Fifty Thousand Men are soon in arms—Their Leaders are appointed—Henri de Larochejaquelein joins them—First Conflicts, and great Activity in the Country—The Peasants' rude Levies—Their enthusiastic Valour—But cannot be kept to their Standards after any success—Their Mode of giving Orders, and Fighting—Their Humanity, till it was extinguished by the Republicans—Character of Bonchamps—Of Cathelineau—Of Henri de Larochejaquelein—Of M. de Lescure—Of D'Elbée—Stofflet, and Charette—The Forces which they severally Commanded—Savage Orders of the Convention to Extinguish the Revolt—The Republicans are Defeated at Thouars—Storming of Chataignerie and Fontenay—Bishop of Agra—Great Effect of that Incident—Victory over the Republicans at Fontenay—Repeated Successes of the Royalists—Their great Victory at Saumur—Cathelineau created Commander-in-Chief—The Royalists Defeated in their Attack on Nantes—Death of Cathelineau—D'Elbée Generalissimo—General Invasion of the Bocage on all Sides—Arrival of the Garrison of Mayence—Able Design of Bonchamps, which is not Adopted—Defeat of the Republicans at Torfou—Defeat of General Rossignol and the Republicans at Coron—General Defeat of the Republican Invasion—Vigorous Exertions of the Government at Paris—Ruinous Divisions of the Royalists—Fresh Invasion by the Republicans—The Royalists are Defeated, and M. de Lescure mortally Wounded—Desperate State of the Royalists—Battle of Cholet, in which they are Defeated, and D'Elbée and Bonchamps mortally Wounded—Humanity of Bonchamps to Five Thousand Republican Prisoners—Atrocious Cruelty of the Republicans—Dreadful passage of the Loire—The Royalists enter Brittany—Battle of Chateau Gonthier gained by them—Desperate State of the Republicans after their Defeat—Death of M. de Lescure—Attack on Granville—The Royalists are Repulsed—Their Retreat towards the Loire—They Defeat the Republicans at Pontorson, and at Dol—Their great Difficulties, notwithstanding these Victories—They are Repulsed at Angers—Defeated with great Loss at Mans—Their Hopeless State—Heroic Conduct of Henri de Larochejaquelein—Final Rout at Savenay—Tardy Movements of the English to Support the Insurgents—Operations of Charette—Death of Henri de Larochejaquelein, and the Prince of Talmont—Unheard of Cruelties of the Republicans—Thurreau and the Infernal Columns—Executions at Nantes—Company of Marat—Carrier—Republican Marriages and Baptisms—Dreadful

Scenes in the Prisons—Adventure of Agatha Larochejaquelein, and Madame de Bonchamps—Cruelty of the small Shopkeepers in the Towns—Heroic Benevolence of the Country Peasants—Reflections on the extraordinary Successes of the Vendéans, and the Causes of their Disasters—Vendéan War finally commits the Revolution against Religion.

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THE French Revolution was a revolt not only against the government and institutions, but the opinions and the belief of former times. It was ushered in by an inundation of scepticism and infidelity; it was attended by unexampled cruelty to the ministers of religion; it led to the overthrow of every species of devotion, and the education of a generation ignorant even of the first elements of the Christian faith. When the French soldiers approached the cradle of their religion, when they beheld Mount Carmel and Nazareth, when they visited the birth-place of Christ, and saw from afar the scene of his sufferings, the holy names inspired them with no emotion; they gazed on them only as Syrian villages, unconnected either by history or tradition, with any interesting recollections. The descendants of Godfrey of Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse, of those who perished in the service of the holy sepulchre, viewed the scenes of the Crusaders' glory with indifference; and names at which their forefathers would have thrilled with emotion, were regarded by them only as the abode of barbarous tribes.[1]

[1] Lav. i.372.

Origin of the Religious Resistance in La Vendée to the Revolution.

But it was not in the nature of things, it was not the intention of Providence, that this prodigious Revolution should be effected without a struggle, or the Christian faith obliterated for a time from a nation's thoughts, without a more desperate contest than the dearest interest of present existence could produce. Such a warfare accordingly arose, and marked too with circumstances of deeper atrocity than even the Reign of Terror, or the rule of Robespierre. It began, not amidst the dignity of rank, or the lustre of

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courts; not among those distinguished by their knowledge, or blessed by their fortune, but among the simple inhabitants of a remote district; among those who had gained least by the ancient institutions, and periled most in seeking to restore them. While the nobility of France basely fled on the first appearance of danger, while the higher orders of the clergy betrayed their religion by their pusillanimity, or disgraced it by their profligacy; the dignity of patriotism, the sublimity of devotion, appeared amidst the simplicity of rural life; and the peasants of La Vendée set an example of heroism which might well put their superiors to the blush, for the innumerable advantages of fortune which they had misapplied, and the vast opportunities of usefulness which they had neglected. It was there too, as in the first ages of Christianity, that the noblest examples of religious duty were to be found; and while the light of reason was unable to restrain its triumphant votaries from unheard of excesses, and stained with blood the efforts of freedom; the village pastors, and uneducated flocks of La Vendée bore the temptations of victory without seduction, and the ordeal of suffering without dismay.

Character and Aspect of the Country.

The district immortalized by the name of La Vendée, embraces a part of Poitou, of Anjou, and of the county of Nantes, and is now divided into four departments, those of Loire Inferieure, Maine and Loire, Deux Sevres, and Vendée. It is bounded on the north by the Loire, from Nantes to Angers; on the west, by the sea; on the south, by the road from Niort to Fontenay, Lucon, and the Sables d'Olonne; on the east, by a line passing through Brissac, Thouars, Parthenay, and Niort. This space comprehends the whole of what was properly the seat of the La Vendée contest, and contains 800,000 souls;[1] the Loire separat-

[1] Guerres des Vend. i. 10. Beauch. i. Th. iv. 165, et seq.

ed that district from that which afterwards became so well known from the Chouan wars.

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This country differs, both in its external aspect, and the manners of its inhabitants, from any other part of France. It is composed for the most part of inconsiderable hills, not connected with any chain of mountains, but which rise in gentle undulations from the generally level surface of the country. The valleys are narrow, but of no great depth; and at their bottom flow little streams, which glide by a gentle descent to the Loire, or the neighbouring ocean. Great blocks of granite rise up at intervals on the heights, and resemble castellated ruins amidst a forest of vegetation. On the banks of the Sevre, the scenery assumes a bolder character, and that stream flows in a deep and rocky bed amidst overhanging woods; but in the districts bordering on the Loire, the declivities are more gentle, and extensive valleys reward the labours of the cultivator.[1]

[1] Laroch. 31, 32. Beauch. i.8.

The Bocage, as its name indicates, is covered with trees; not indeed anywhere disposed in large masses, but surrounding the little inclosures into which the country is subdivided. The smallness of the farms, the great subdivision of landed property, and the prevalence of cattle husbandry, has rendered the custom universal of enclosing every field, how small soever, with hedges, which are surmounted by pollards, whose branches are cut every five years for firewood to the inhabitants. Little grain is raised, the population depending chiefly on the sale of their cattle, or the produce of the dairy; and the landscape is only diversified at intervals in autumn, by yellow patches glittering through the surrounding foliage, or clusters of vines overhanging the rocky eminences.[2] The air in this region is pure, the farms small, the situation of

The Bocage. Its peculiar Character.

[2] Guerres des Vend. i. 16. Laroch. 32. Beauch. i.8. Th. iv. 165, 166.

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the farm-houses, overshadowed by aged oaks, or peeping out of luxuriant foliage, picturesque in the extreme. There are neither navigable rivers nor canals, no great roads nor towns in the district; secluded in his leafy shroud, each peasant cultivates his little domain, severed alike from the elegancies, the ambition, or the seductions of the world.[1]

[1] Beauch. i. 9.

The part of La Vendée which adjoins the ocean to the south of the district, and formerly was buried beneath its waves, is called the Marais, and bore a prominent part in this memorable contest. It is perfectly flat, and in great part impregnated by salt marshes, which never yield to the force of the sun. This humid country is intersected by innumerable canals, communicating with each other, which are planted with willows, alders, poplars, and other marsh trees, whose luxuriant foliage frequently overshadow the little enclosures. The peasants are never seen without a long pole in their hands, with the aid of which they leap over the canals and ditches with surprising agility. Nothing can be more simple than the habits of the inhabitants; one roof covers a whole family, their cows and lambs, which feed on their little possessions; the chief food of the people is obtained from milk, and the fish which they obtain in great quantities in the canals, with which their country is intersected. The silence and deserted aspect of these secluded retreats; the sombre tint of the landscape, and the sallow complexions of the inhabitants, give a melancholy air to the country; but in the midst of its gloom, a certain feeling of sublimity is experienced even by the passing traveller;[2] and in no part of France did the people give greater proofs of an elevated and enthusiastic character.

[2] Beauch. i. 6, 7.

Personal observation.

A single great road, that from Nantes to Rochelle,

traverses the district; another from Tours to Bourdeaux, by Poitiers, diverges from it, leaving betwixt them a space thirty leagues in extent, where nothing but cross roads are to be found. These cross roads are all dug out as it were between two hedges, whose branches frequently meet over the head of the passenger; while in winter, or rainy weather, they generally become the beds of streams. They intersect each other extremely often, and such is the general uniformity of the scenery, and the absence of any remarkable feature in the country, that the natives frequently lose themselves if they wander two or three leagues from their place of ordinary residence.[1]

[1] Laroch. 34. Guerres des Vend. i. 16. Th. iv. 166, 167.

This peculiar conformation of the country offered the greatest obstacles to an invading army. "It is," says General Kleber, "an obscure and boundless labyrinth, in which it is impossible to advance with security even with the greatest precautions. You are obliged, across a succession of natural redoubts and intrenchments, to seek out the road, the moment that you leave the great chaussée; and when you do find it, it is generally a narrow defile, not only impracticable for artillery, but for the smallest species of chariots which accompany an army. The great roads have no other advantage in this respect but that arising from their greater breadth; for being everywhere shut in by the same species of enclosure, it is rarely possible either to deploy into line, or become aware of your enemy till you are assailed by his fire."[2]

[2] Kleber, Mem. 19. Guerres des Vend. i. 18.

There are no manufactures or great towns in the country. The land is cultivated by métayers, who divide the produce with the proprietors, and it is rare to find a farm which yields the proprietor a profit of L.25 a-year. The sale of the cattle constitutes almost the whole wealth of the country. Few magnificent

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chateaus are to be seen; the properties are in general of moderate extent, the landlords all resident, and their habits simple in the extreme. The luxury and vices of Paris had never penetrated into the Bocage, the sole luxury of the proprietors consisted in rustic plenty and good cheer; their sole amusement the chase, at which they have long been exceedingly expert. The habits of the gentlemen rendered them both excellent marksmen, and capable of enduring fatigue without inconvenience; the ladies travelled on horseback, or in carts drawn by oxen.[1]

[1] Laroch. 34. Lac. xi. 11, 12. Th. iv. 166.

Manners of the Inhabitants and the Landlords.

But what chiefly distinguished this simple district from every other part of France, and what is particularly remarkable in a political point of view, is the relation, elsewhere unknown, which there subsisted between the landlords and the tenantry on their estates. The proprietor was not only always resident, but constantly engaged in connexions either of mutual interest, or of kindly feeling, with those who cultivated his lands. He visited their farms, conversed with them about their cattle, attended their marriages and christenings, rejoiced with them when they rejoiced, and sympathized with them when they wept. On holydays, the youths of both sexes danced at the chateau, and the ladies joined in the festive circle. No sooner was a boar or wolf hunt determined on, than the peasantry of all the neighbouring estates were summoned to partake in the sport; every one took his fusil, and repaired with joy to the post assigned to him; and they afterwards followed their landlords to the field of battle with the same alacrity with which they had attended them in those scenes of festivity and amusement.[2]

[2] Laroch. 35. Beauch. i. 17, 18.

These invaluable habits, joined to a native goodness of heart, rendered the inhabitants of the Bocage

an excellent people; and it is not surprising, that while the peasantry elsewhere in France revolted against their landlords, those of La Vendée almost all perished in combating with them against the Revolution. They were gentle, pious, charitable, and hospitable, full of courage and energy, with pure feelings and uncorrupted manners. Rarely was a crime, seldom a lawsuit, heard of amongst them. Their character was a mixture of savage courage and submissive affection to their benefactors; while they addressed their landlords with familiarity, they had the most unbounded devotion to them in their hearts.[1] Their temperament inclined them rather to melancholy; but they were capable, like most men of that character, of the most exalted sentiments. Slow and methodical in their habits, they were little inclined to adopt the revolutionary sentiments which had overspread so large a portion of the population in the more opulent districts of France; when once they were impressed with any truth, they invariably followed the course which they deemed right, without any regard either to its consequences, or the chances of success with which it was attended. Isolated in the midst of their woods, they lived alone with their children and their cattle; their conversation, their amusements, their songs, all partook of the rural character. Governed by ancient habits, they detested every species of innovation, and knew no principle in politics or religion but to fear God and honour the King.[2]

[1] Laroch. 35. Guerres des Vend. i. 24. Th. iv. 166.

[2] Beauch. i. 14, 15.

Religion, as might naturally be expected with such manners, exercised an unbounded sway over these simple people. They looked up with filial veneration to their village pastors, whose habits and benevolence rendered them a faithful image of the primitive church. But little removed from their flocks either in wealth,

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situation, or information, they sympathized with their feelings, partook of their festivities, assuaged their sorrows. They were to be seen beside the cradle of childhood, the fireside of maturity, the deathbed of age; they were regarded as the best friends of this life, and the dispensers of eternal felicity in that to come. The supporters of the Revolution accused them of fanaticism; and doubtless there was a great degree of superstition mingled with their belief, as there must be with that of every religious people in the early stages of society; but it was a superstition of so gentle and holy a kind, as proved a blessing rather than a misfortune to those who were subjected to its influence; and while the political fanaticism of the Revolution steeped its votaries in unheard-of atrocities, the religious fanaticism of La Vendée only drew tighter the bonds of moral duty, or enlarged the sphere of Christian charity.[1]

[1] Laroch. 35. Th. iv. 167. Guerres des Vend. i. 29, 31. Lac. xi. 9—13.

When the Revolution broke out in 1789, the inhabitants of this district were not distinguished by any peculiar opposition to its tenets. Those who dwelt in the towns were there, as elsewhere, warm supporters of the new order of things; and though the inhabitants of the Bocage felt averse to any changes which disturbed the tranquillity of their rural lives, yet they yielded obedience to all the orders of the Assembly, and only showed their predilection for their ancient masters, by electing them to all the situations of trust of which they had the disposal. In vain the revolutionary authorities urged them to exert the privileges with which the new constitution had invested them; the current ran so strongly in favour of the old proprietors, that all their efforts were fruitless. When the National Guards were formed, the seigneur was besought in every parish to become its commander;

when the mayors were to be appointed, he was immediately invested with the dignity; when the seignorial seats were ordered to be removed from the churches, the peasants refused to execute it; all the efforts of the revolutionists, like throwing water on a higher level, only brought an accession of power to the depositaries of the ancient authority. A memorable instance of the kindly feeling which necessarily grows up between a resident body of landed proprietors and the tenantry on their estates; and a decisive proof of the triumphant stand which might have been made against the fury of the Revolution, had the same kindly offices which had there produced so large a return of gratitude on the part of the peasantry, existed on the landlord's side in the other parts of France.[1]

[1] Laroch. 36. Th. iv. 167. Guerres des Vend. i. 145. Lac. xi. 14. Beauch. i. 17, 25.

It was the violent measures of the Assembly against the clergy which first awakened the sympathy of the rural tenantry. When the people in the Bocage saw their ancient pastors, who had been drawn from their own circle, bred up amongst themselves, and to whom they were attached by every bond of affection and gratitude, removed because they refused to take the revolutionary oaths, and their place supplied by a new set of teachers, imbued with different tenets, strangers in the country, and ignorant of its dialect, their indignation knew no bounds. They ceased to attend the churches where the intruding clergy had been installed, and assembled with zeal in the woods and solitudes, where the expelled clergy still taught their faithful and weeping flocks. The new clergyman of the parish of Echaubroigniés was obliged to quit his living from the experienced impossibility of procuring either fire or provisions in a parish of four thousand inhabitants.[2] These angry feelings led to several contests between the National Guards of the

Discontent excited by the first severity against the Priests.

[2] Laroch. 38, 39. Guerres des Vend. i. 65. Lac. xi. 12, 13.

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towns, or the gendarmerie and the peasantry, in which the people suffered severely; and the heroism of the prisoners in their last moments augmented the loyalty and enthusiasm of the people.

Previous Conspiracy in Brittany, and abortive attempts at Insurrection.

These causes produced a serious insurrection in the Morbihan, near Vannes, in February 1790; but the peasants, though several thousands in number, were dispersed with great slaughter by the National Guard, and the severities exercised on the occasion long terrified the indignant inhabitants into submission. Another revolt broke out in May 1791, occasioned by the severities against the faithful clergy; and the heroism of the peasants who were put to death, evinced the strength of the religious enthusiasm which had now taken possession of their minds. "Lay down your arms," exclaimed several Republican horsemen to a peasant of Lower Poitou, who only defended himself with a fork. "Restore me first my God," replied he, and fell pierced by two-and-twenty wounds.[1]

[1] Beauch. i. 26, 28.

During the summer of 1792, the gentlemen of Brittany entered into an extensive association, for the purpose of rescuing the country from the oppressive yoke which they had received from the Parisian demagogues. At the head of the whole was the Marquis de la Rouarie, one of those remarkable men who rise into eminence during the stormy days of a revolution, from conscious ability to direct its waves. Ardent, impetuous, and enthusiastic, he was first distinguished in the American war, when the intrepidity of his conduct attracted the admiration of the Republican troops, and the same qualities rendered him at first an ardent supporter of the Revolution in France; but when the atrocities of the people began, he espoused with equal warmth the opposite side, and used the utmost efforts to rouse the noblesse of Brit-

tany against the plebeian yoke which had been imposed upon them by the National Assembly. He submitted his plan to the Count d'Artois, and had organized one so extensive as would have proved extremely formidable to the Convention, if the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, in September 1792, had not damped the whole of the west of France, then ready to break out into insurrection. Still the organization continued, and he had contrived to engage not only all Brittany, but the greater part of the gentlemen of La Vendée, in the cause, when his death, occasioned by a paroxysm of grief for the execution of Louis, cut him off in the midst of his ripening schemes, and proved an irreparable loss to the Royalist party, by depriving it of the advantages which otherwise would have arisen from simultaneous and concerted operations on both banks of the Loire. The conspiracy was discovered after his death, and twelve of the noblest gentlemen in Brittany perished on the same day, in thirteen minutes, under the same guillotine. They all behaved with the utmost constancy, refused the assistance of the constitutional clergy, and after tenderly embracing at the foot of the scaffold, died exclaiming *Vive le Roi.* One young lady of rank and beauty, Angelique Desilles, was condemned by mistake for her sister-in-law, for whom she was taken. She refused to let the error be divulged, and died with serenity the victim of heroic affection.[1]

[1] Beauch. i. 34, 63, 70.

March 10, 1793. The levy of 300,000 Men occasions an Insurrection.

These severities excited the utmost indignation among all the Royalists in the west of France. These feelings, with difficulty suppressed during the winter of 1792, broke out into open rebellion in consequence of the levy of 300,000 men ordered by the Convention in February 1793. The attempt to enforce this obnoxious measure occasioned a general resistance,

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1793. which broke out without any previous concert, at the same time over the whole country. The chief points of the revolt were St Florent, in Anjou, and Challons in Lower Poitou; at the former of which places, the young men, headed by Jaques Cathelineau, defeated the Republican detachment intrusted with the execution of the decree of the Convention, and made themselves masters of a piece of cannon. This celebrated leader, having heard of the revolt at St Florent, was strongly moved by the recital, and addressing five peasants who surrounded him:—"We will be ruined," he exclaimed, "if we remain inactive; the country will be crushed by the Republic. We must all take up arms." The whole six set out amidst the tears of their wives and children, and fearlessly commenced a war with a power which the kings of Europe were unable to subdue.[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 47. Guerres de Vend. i. 67. 72. Beauch. i. 89, 90.

March 14. A few days after, the insurrection assumed a more serious aspect at Cholet, which was attacked by several thousand armed peasants; the Republicans opposed a vigorous resistance, but they were at length overwhelmed by the number and resolution of the insurgents. An incident on that occasion marked in a singular manner the novel character of the war. In the line of retreat which the Republicans followed, was placed a representation of our Saviour on Mount Calvary, and this arrested the progress of the victors, as all the peasants, as they passed the holy spot, fell on their knees before the images, and addressed a prayer, with uplifted hands, before they resumed the pursuit. This continued even under a severe fire from the National Guards; the peasants threw themselves on their knees within twenty-five paces of the post occupied by the enemy, and bared their bosoms to the fatal fire, as if courting death in so holy a cause. When they

made themselves masters of the town, instead of indulging in pillage or excesses of any sort, they flocked in crowds to the churches to return thanks to God; and contented themselves with the provisions which were voluntarily brought to them by the inhabitants. Everywhere the insurrection bore the same character; the indignities offered to the clergy were its exciting cause; and a mixture of courage and devotion its peculiar character. In a few days fifty thousand men were in a state of insurrection in the four departments of La Vendée; but on the approach of Easter, the inhabitants all returned to their homes to celebrate their devotions; and a Republican column despatched from Angers, traversed the whole country without meeting with any opposition, or finding an enemy on their road.[1]

Fifty thousand Men are soon in arms.

[1] Laroch. 49. Jom. iii. 390. Beauch. i. 95, 97, 102. Th. iv. 171, 172. Guerres des Vend. i. 74, 76.

After the Easter solemnities were over, the peasants assembled anew; but they now felt the necessity of having some leaders of a higher rank to direct their movements, and went to the chateaus to ask the few gentlemen who remained in the country to put themselves at their head. They were not long in answering the appeal: M. De Lescure, De Larochejaquelein, Bonchamps, Stofflet, D'Elbée, put themselves at the head of the tenantry over which they had most influence: while the brave Cathelineau, though only a charioteer, who had already, by his successful enterprise, gained the confidence of the peasantry, was made commander-in chief; names since immortalized in the rolls of Fame, and which long opposed an invincible barrier to the progress of revolution, and acquired only additional lustre, and shone with a purer light, from the suffering and disasters which preceded their fall.[2]

Their Leaders are appointed.

[2] Laroch. i. 49.

While the peasants of the neighbouring parishes

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assembled to put themselves under Henri de Larochejaquelein, he addressed them in these memorable words:—"My friends, if my father was here he would be worthy of your confidence: I am but a youth, but I hope to show myself worthy of commanding you by my courage. If I advance, follow me; if I retreat, kill me; if I fall, avenge me." The peasants answered him with acclamations; but their arms and equipment were far from corresponding to the spirit by which they were animated. Most of them had no other weapon but scythes, pikes, and sticks; not two hundred fusils were to be found among many thousand men. Sixty pounds of powder, discovered in the hands of a miner, which had been used for blasting rocks, formed their whole ammunition. The skill and intrepidity of their chief, however, supplied every deficiency. He led them next day to attack a Republican detachment at Aubiers, and, by disposing them behind the hedges, kept up so murderous a fire upon the enemy, that they wavered, upon which he rushed forward at the head of the most resolute, and drove them from the field with the loss of two pieces of cannon.[1]

[1] Laroch. 66, 67. Jom. iii. 390. Bonch. 41. Beauch. i. 141.

First Conflicts, and great activity in the Country.

La Vendée soon became the theatre of innumerable conflicts, in which the tactics and success of the insurgents were nearly the same. An inconceivable degree of activity immediately prevailed over the whole country, the male population were all in insurrection, or busily engaged in the manufacture of arms; the shepherds converted their peaceful huts into work-shops, where nothing was heard but strokes of the hammer, and the din of warlike preparation. Instruments of husbandry were rudely transformed into hostile weapons; formed for the support of life, they became the deadly instruments of its destruction. Agriculture at

the same time was not neglected, it was intrusted to the women and children; but if fortune proved adverse, and the hostile columns approached, they, too, left their homes, and flew to the field of battle, to stimulate the courage of their husbands, stanch their wounds, or afford them shelter from the pursuit of their enemies.[1]

[1] Bonch. 43. Jom. iii. 390.

The Peasants' mode of fighting.

The method of fighting pursued by this brave but motley assemblage was admirably adapted both to the spirit by which they were animated, and the peculiar nature of the district in which the contest was conducted. Their tactics consisted in lining the numerous hedges with which the fields were enclosed, and remaining unseen, till the Republicans had got fairly enveloped by their forces; they then opened a fire at once from every direction, and with such fatal accuracy, that a large proportion of the enemy were generally prostrated by the first discharge. This thicket species of warfare continued till the Republican ranks began to fall into confusion; upon which they instantly leapt from their places of concealment with loud cries, and, headed by their chiefs, rushed upon the artillery. The bravest took the lead, fixing their eyes on the cannon's mouth, they prostrated themselves on the ground the moment they saw the flash; and rising up when the sound was heard, ran forward with the utmost rapidity to the battery, where the cannoneers, if they had not taken to flight, were generally bayoneted at their guns.[2] In these exploits the chiefs always led the way; this was not merely the result of a buoyant courage, but of consideration and necessity; the Vendéans were in that stage of society, when ascendency is acquired by personal daring, and the soldiers have no confidence in the chiefs, if they are not before them in individual prowess.[3]

[2] Bonchamps, 43. Beauch. i. 187. Laroch. 68. Jom. iii. 391.

[3] Laroch. 66. Beauch. i. 186, 187.

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Although the Vendéans took up arms for the royal cause, the most perfect confusion of ranks pervaded their forces. High and low, rich and poor, were, at the commencement of the war, alike ignorant of the military art. The soldiers were never drilled, a limited number of them only had been habituated to the use of fire-arms. In this extremity the choice of the soldiers fell on the most intrepid or skilful of their number, without much attention to superiority of station. A brave peasant, a shopkeeper in a little town, was the comrade of a gentleman: they led the same life, were interested in the same objects, shared the same dangers. The distinction of birth, the pride of descent, even the shades of individual thought, were obliterated in the magnitude of present perils. Many differences of opinion existed in the beginning of the contest, but the atrocities of the Republicans soon made them disappear in the Royalist army. Persons of intelligence or skill, of whatever grade, became officers, they knew not how; the peasants insensibly ranged themselves under their orders, and maintained their obedience only as long as they showed themselves worthy to command.[1]

[1] Laroch. 69, 100, 101. Beauch. i. 185–190.

It was extremely difficult for the Republicans in the outset to withstand this irregular force, acting in such a country, and animated with so enthusiastic a spirit. There was in all the early actions a prodigious difference between their losses and those of their opponents. The peasants, dispersed in single file between the hedges, fired with a clear view of their enemies, who were either in columns, or two deep, in the fields; while their fire could only be answered by a discharge at a green mass, through which the figures of the Royalists were scarcely discernible. Harassed and disconcerted by this murderous fire, the Republicans

were rarely able to withstand the terrible burst, when, with loud shouts, the Royalists broke from their concealment, and fell sword in hand on the thinned ranks of their opponents. Defeat was still more bloody than action. Broken and dispersed, they fled through a woody and impervious country, and fell into the hands of the few peasantry who still remained in the villages, and assembled with alacrity to complete the destruction of their enemies. When the Royalists, on the other hand, were broken, they immediately dispersed, leapt over the hedges, and returned home without the victors being able to reach them. Nowise discouraged by the reverse, they assembled again in arms, with renewed hopes, in a few days, and gaily took the field, singing, "Vive le Roi quand meme."[1]

[1] Laroch. 69, 70. Beauch, i. 184, 188, 190.

When a day was fixed on for any exploit, the tocsin sounded in the village assigned as the rendezvous of the peasants—the neighbouring steeples repeated the signal, the farmers abandoned their homes if it was night, their ploughs if day, hung their fusils over their shoulders, bound their girdle loaded with cartouches round their waists, tied their handkerchiefs over the broad-brimmed hats which shaded their sun burnt visages, addressed a short prayer to God, and gaily repaired to the appointed place with a full confidence in the protection of Heaven and the justice of their cause. There they met the chiefs, who explained to them the nature and object of the expedition on which they were to be employed; and if it was the attack of an enemy's column, the route they were to follow, the point of attack, and the hour and manner in which it was to be made. Immediately the groups dispersed, but the men regained their ranks; every one repaired to the station assigned to him, and soon every tree, every bush, every tuft of broom which adjoin-

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ed the road concealed a peasant holding his musket in one hand, resting on the other, watching like a savage animal, without either moving or drawing his breath.[1]

[1] Desmoncourt, La Vendée, 30

Meanwhile the enemies column advanced, preceded by a cloud of scouts and light troops, who were allowed to proceed without challenge close to the lurking foe. They waited till the division was fairly engaged in the defile, and was so far advanced that it could not recede; then a cry was suddenly raised like that of a cat, and repeated along the whole line, as a signal that every one was at his post. If the same answer was given, a human voice was suddenly heard ordering the attack. Instantly a deadly volley proceeded from every tree, every hedge, every thicket: a shower of balls fell upon the soldiers without their being able to see the assailants, the dead and the wounded fell together into the bottom of the road, and if the column did not immediately fall into confusion, and the voice of the officer heard above the roar of musketry, roused them to burst through the hedges by which they were enveloped, the peasants instantly fell back behind the next enclosure, and from its leafy rampart a fire as deadly proceeded as that which mowed them down on the road. If this second hedge was carried in the same manner, three, four, ten, twenty entrenchments of the same sort offer their support to that murderous retreat: for the whole country is subdivided in this manner, and everywhere offers to its children an asylum, to its enemies a tomb.[2]

[2] Ibid. 31.

Their enthusiastic Valour.

But the great cause of the early and astonishing success of the Vendéans was their enthusiastic and indomitable valour. The Republicans were, for the most part, composed of National Guards and Volunteers, who, though greatly better armed, equipped, and

disciplined, were totally destitute of the ardent devoted spirit with which the Royalists were animated. The former took the field from no common feeling, but from the terror of the requisitions and sanguinary measures of the Convention; the latter fought alongside of their neighbours and landlords, in defence of their hearths, their children, and their religion; the one acted in obedience to the dictates of an unseen, but terrible power, which had crushed the freedom in whose name they were arrayed; the other yielded to their hereditary feelings of loyalty, and deemed themselves secure of Paradise in combating for their salvation. [1]

[1] Guerres des Vend. i. 55. Laroch. 70. Beauch. i. 185, 189.

Had the Vendéan chiefs possessed the same authority over their troops, which is enjoyed by the commanders of regular soldiers, they might at one time have marched to Paris, and done that which all the forces of the Coalition were unable to effect. But their greatest success was always paralyzed, by the impossibility of retaining the soldiers at their colours for any considerable length of time. The bulk of the forces were never assembled for more than three or four days together. No sooner was the battle lost or won, the expedition successful or defeated, than the peasants returned to their homes. The chiefs were left alone with a few hundred deserters or strangers, who had no family to return to, and all the advantages of former success were lost for want of the means of following them up. The army, however, was as easily reformed as it was dissolved; messengers were despatched to all the parishes; the tocsin sounded, the peasants assembled at their parish churches, when the requisition was read, which was generally in the following terms:—"In the holy name of God! and by the command of the King; this parish is in-

But cannot be kept to their Standards after any success.

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vited to send as many men as possible to such a place, at such an hour, with provisions for so many days." The order was obeyed with alacrity; the only emulation among the peasants was, who should attend the expedition. Each soldier brought a certain quantity of bread with him, and some stores were also provided by the generals. The corn and oxen necessary for the subsistence of the army were voluntarily furnished by the gentlemen and chief proprietors, or drawn by requisitions from the estates of the emigrants, and as the troops never remained together for any length of time, no want of provisions was ever experienced. The villages vied with each other for the privilege of sending carts for the service of the army, and the peasant girls flocked to the chapels on the road-side to furnish provisions to the soldiers, or offer up prayers for their success.[1]

[1] Laroch. 101, 102. Jom. iii. 390, 391, 397. Th. iv. 174 Beauch. i. 184. Guerres des Vend. i. 98.

The army had neither chariots nor baggage-waggons; tents were totally out of the question. But the hospitals were regulated with peculiar care; all the wounded, whether Royalists or Republicans, being transported to St Laurent sur Sevre, where the charitable sisters, and religious votaries, who flocked from all quarters to the scene of woe, assuaged their sufferings. They never could be brought to establish patrols or sentinels, or take any of the precautions against surprise, which are in use among regular troops; and this irregularity not only exposed them to frequent reverses, but rendered unavailing their greatest successes. The men marched, in general, four abreast, the officers in front being alone acquainted with their destination. They had few dragoons; and their cavalry, which never exceeded nine hundred men, was almost entirely mounted by the horses taken from the Republicans.[2]

[2] Beauch. i. 185, 186. Laroch. 103.

When the troops were assembled, they were divid-

ed into different columns, to attack the points selected by the generals. The only orders given, were—Such a leader goes such a road; who follows him? Arrived at the point of attack, the commands were given after the same fashion: Move towards that house, towards that tree; leap that hedge, were the only orders ever issued. Neither threats, nor the promise of rewards, could induce them to send forward scouts; when that duty was necessary, the officers were obliged to take it upon themselves. The peasants never went into battle without saying their prayers, and generally made the sign of the cross before they discharged their firelocks. They had a few standards, which were displayed on important occasions; but no sooner was the victory gained, than they piled standards and drums upon their carts, and returned with songs of triumph to their villages.[1]

Their Mode of giving Orders and Fighting.

[1] Laroch. 104. Jom. iii. 390, 391.

When the battle began, and the sound of the musketry and cannon was heard, the women, the children, the sick, and the aged, flocked to the churches, or prostrated themselves in the fields to implore a blessing on their arms. With truth it might be said, that, on such occasions, there was but one thought, one wish, throughout all La Vendée; every one awaiting, in prayer, the issue of a struggle on which the fate of all depended.[2]

[2] Laroch. 104.

As the insurection broke out from the prevalence of a common feeling, without any previous concert, so it was conducted without any definite object, or the least alloy of individual ambition. Even after their great successes had inspired the most desponding with the hope of contributing in a powerful manner to the restoration of the monarchy, the wishes of the insurgents were of the most moderate kind. To have the King once visit their sequestered country; to be al-

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lowed, in memory of the war, to have a white flag on each steeple; to be permitted to furnish a detachment for the body-guard of the sovereign, and to have some old projects for the improvement of the roads, and navigation of the country, carried into effect, constituted the sole wishes of those whose valour had so nearly accomplished the restoration of the monarchy.[1]

[1] Laroch. 104, 105.

Their Humanity, till it was extinguished by the Republicans.

The early successes of the Vendéans, and their enthusiastic valour, did not extinguish the humanity which their dispositions, and the influence of religion had nourished in their bosoms. In the latter stages of the war, the atrocities of the Republicans, the sight of their villages in flames, and their wives and children massacred, inflamed an unextinguishable desire of vengeance; but during the first months of the contest, their gentleness was as touching as their valour was admirable. After entering by assault into the towns, they neither pillaged the inhabitants, nor exacted either contribution or ransom; frequently they were to be seen, shivering with cold, or starving with hunger, in quarters abounding both with fuel and provisions.[2] "In the house where I lodged," says Madame de Larochejaquelein, at Bressuire, "there were many soldiers, who were lamenting that they had no tobacco; I asked if there was none in the town. 'Plenty,' they replied, 'but we have no money to buy it.' Under our windows, a quarrel arose between two horsemen, and the one wounded the other slightly with his sabre; his antagonist quickly disarmed him, and was proceeding to extremities, when M. de Larochejaquelein exclaimed from the windows—'Jesus Christ pardoned his murderers, and a soldier of the Christian army is about to kill his comrade.' The man, abashed, put up his sabre, and embraced his enemy."[3] These touching incidents occurred in a town

[2] Laroch. 90.

[3] Ibid. 91.

recently carried by main force, occupied at the time by twenty thousand insurgents, and peculiarly obnoxious to the Royalists, from the cruelty which its National Guards had exercised towards the peasantry. "In this town," she adds, "I was surprised, in the evening, to see all the soldiers in the house with me on their knees at prayers, and the streets filled with peasants at their devotion; when they were concluded, they led me out to see their favourite cannon, called Marie Jeanne, their first trophy from the Republicans, which, after having been retaken, had again fallen into their hands; it was decorated with flowers and ribands, and the peasants embraced it with tears of joy." When Thouars was carried by assault, the Republican inhabitants were in the utmost consternation, as they anticipated a severe retaliation for the massacre perpetrated by them upon the Royalists in that town, in the August preceding. What then was their astonishment, when they beheld the soldiers, instead of plundering or committing acts of cruelty, flocking to the churches, and returning thanks to God at the altars for the success with which he had blessed their arms. Even the garrison was treated with the most signal humanity. Twelve only were retained from each department, as hostages, and the remainder, without either ransom or exchange, dismissed to their homes.[1]

[1] Beauch. i. 163, 164. Guerres des Vend. i. 89.

In one district only the insurrection was stained with the most frightful atrocities. In the marshes of Lower Poitou the peasants were seized with an incontrollable thirst for vengeance, in consequence of the cruelties exercised by the Republicans on the Royalist leaders during the insurrection of the preceding summer. Machecoult was captured during the absence of Charette; and under the influence of revolting news

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of the Republican cruelties at Nantes and Paris, the prisons were forced by a furious mob, and above eighty Republicans massacred in one day. Nearly five hundred Republicans fell victims to the rage of a Royalist Committee, at the head of which was a wretch named Souchu, who soon after hoisted his true colours and joined the Republicans, but fell a victim to the just indignation of the widows of those he had murdered.[1] Charette, on his return, was horror-struck at these atrocities, and finding his military authority not yet sufficiently established to coerce them, he had recourse to the clergy to aid his efforts. They fabricated a miracle at the tomb of a saint to influence the minds of the people, and while they were prostrated round the altar, conjured them, in the name of the God of Peace, never to kill but in the hour of combat. At the same time, Charette forbid any prisoner to be slain in his army, under pain of death, and concealed in his own house several zealous Republicans, whose heads were loudly demanded by his soldiers. By these means, the cruelty which had commenced and stained the Royalist cause in Lower Poitou, was arrested, and a reply made, in a true Christian spirit, to the savage decrees of the Convention, which had ordered every Vendéan taken in arms to be put to death without mercy in twenty-four hours.[2]

[1] Beauch. i. 123, 124, 129. Th. iv. 172.

March 19, 1793. Pièces Just. No. 10. Beauch. i. 116, 123.

M. Bonchamps, chief of the army of Anjou, was the most distinguished of the Royalist leaders. To the heroic courage of the other chiefs, he joined consummate military talents, and an eloquence which at once gave him an unlimited sway over the minds of the soldiers. Had he lived, the fate of the war would, in all probability, have been widely different, and the expedition beyond the Loire, which led to such disastrous results, the commencement of the most splen-

Character of Bonchamps.

did success. Gentle in his manners, humane in his conduct, affable in his demeanour, he was adored by his soldiers, who were at once the most skilful and best disciplined of the Vendéan corps. In the midst of the furies of a civil war, and the dissensions of rival chiefs, he was the enemy of intrigue; free from personal ambition, he was intrusted with an important command, solely from his personal merits. His character may be appreciated from the words which he addressed to his young and weeping wife, when he put himself at the head of his troops. "Summon to your aid all your courage; redouble your patience and resignation, you will have need for the exercise of all these virtues. We must not deceive ourselves; we can look for no recompense in this world for what we are to suffer; all that it could offer would be beneath the purity of our motives, and the sanctity of our cause. We must never expect human glory; civil strife affords none. We shall see our houses burned; we shall be plundered, proscribed, outraged, calumniated, perhaps massacred. Let us thank God for enabling us to foresee the worst, since that presage, by redoubling the merit of our actions, will enable us to anticipate the heavenly reward which awaits those who are courageous in adversity, and constant in suffering. Let us raise our eyes and our thoughts to Heaven, it is there that we shall find a guide which cannot mislead, a force which cannot be shaken, an eternal reward for transitory grief."[1]

[1] Bonch. 25. Beauch. i. 98. Jom. iii. 392. Th. iv. 176. Laroch. 93.

Cathelineau, a peasant by birth, and a ~~charioteer~~ by profession, was the first of the chiefs who acquired the unlimited confidence of the soldiers. To an extraordinary degree of intelligence, and the strongest natural sagacity, he joined a nervous eloquence, admirably calculated to influence the soldiers. His age

Of Cathelineau.

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was thirty-four years; his disposition humble, modest, and retiring. Such was his reputation for piety and rectitude, that the peasants called him the Saint of Anjou, and earnestly sought to be placed in battle by his side, deeming it impossible that those could be wounded who were near so unblemished a man.[1]

[1] Laroch 95. Beauch. i. 91, 92.

Of Henri de Larochejaquelein.

Henri de Larochejaquelein, son of the Marquis Larochejaquelein, was the leader of all the parishes which were situated round Chatillon. He refused to follow the general tide of emigration, and on the contrary, repaired to Paris to defend the constitutional monarchy; and when the Revolt on the 10th August overturned the throne, he set out for La Vendée, exclaiming, "I will retire to my province, and soon you will hear of me." Though still young, he acquired the confidence of the soldiers by his invincible courage and coolness in action, which gained for him the sirname of the Intrepid. He was reproached for being too forward in battle, carried away by his ardour, and forgetting the general in the soldier. Frequently before making a prisoner, he offered to give him the chance of escape by a personal conflict. Councils of war, or the duties of a commander, fatigued his buoyant disposition, and he generally fell asleep after giving his opinion, and answered to the reproaches of his brother officers, "Why do you insist upon making me a general; I wish only to be a hussar, to have the pleasure of fighting." Notwithstanding this passion for danger, he was full of sweetness and humanity, and when the combat was over, no one was more generous to the vanquished. Even after his eminent services, he formed only the most humble wishes for himself. "Should we replace the King on the throne," said he, "I hope he will give me a regiment of hussars." He performed the most eminent services in

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the war, and at its most critical period, was unanimously elected to the supreme command. After innumerable heroic actions, he fell in an obscure skirmish, and was interred in the cemetery of St Aubin. "Chance," says the annalist, "has covered his tomb, as well as that of his brother Louis, with the Flower of Achilles; and never did it blossom over remains more worthy of the name."[1]

[1] Genoude, 47. Bonch. 41. Laroch. 96, 98. Jom. iii. 393.

Of M. de Lescure.

M. de Lescure, the cousin and intimate friend of Henri de Larochejaquelein, was distinguished by a bravery of a totally different character; cool, intrepid, and sagacious, he was not less daring than his youthful comrade; but his valour was the result of reflection and a sense of duty. His counsels were much regarded from his knowledge of fortification and the art of war, but a certain degree of obstinacy diminished the weight of his opinions. His humanity was angelic; during the whole of that terrible war, in which generals as well as soldiers so often fought personally with their enemies, no one ever fell by his hand; and even in the worst times, when the cruelties of the Republicans had roused the most gentle to fury, he incessantly laboured to save the lives of the prisoners. Learned, studious, and thoughtful, he had prescribed to himself, at the age of eighteen, the most severe economy to discharge the debts of an extravagant father; and it was not till he was twenty-five, and had become a father, that gentler feelings softened the native austerity of his character. His young wife, only daughter of the Marquis of Donnissan, a rich heiress, united to all the beauty and graces more than the courage of her sex. The only occasion on which he was ever heard to swear, was when his indignant soldiers massacred a prisoner behind his back, whom he had disarmed in the act of discharging a musket

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at his bosom. The number of lives which he saved during the war was incalculable; and alone of all the chiefs in that memorable struggle, it could be said with truth, that his glory was unstained by human blood.[1]

[1] Laroch. 97. Bonch. 47. Beauch. i. 147.

Of D'Elbée.

In the Grand Army, as it was called, of La Vendée, the principal chief was M. d'Elbée, of Saxon descent, but naturalized in France. He was forty years old when the contest commenced, ignorant of the world, devout, enthusiastic, and superstitions; but his principal merit consisted in an extraordinary coolness in danger, which rivalled that of Marshal Ney himself. His devotion was sincere, but finding, like Cromwell, that it was the most powerful lever to move the peasants, he carried it to an extravagant height. He acquired, by extraordinary sanctity, an unbounded ascendency over his soldiers, and justified their confidence by great talents as a leader, which ultimately led to his appointment as commander in chief; a situation which he filled with unshaken firmness during a period of disaster and ruin.[2]

[2] Jom, iii. 392. Thureau, Mem. 92. Beauch. i. 97. Th. iv. 176.

Stofflet.

Stofflet, an Alsacian by birth, and a gamekeeper by profession, was early distinguished by his devotion to the Royal cause, and headed some of the first detachments which took the field. Endowed with a powerful frame, hardy in his habits, harsh in his manners, he never acquired, like the chiefs of gentle blood, the love of the soldiers; but his stern character and unbending severity made him more implicitly obeyed than any other leader, and on that account his services were highly prized by the Royalist generals.[3] Active, intelligent, and brave, he was a skilful partisan, rather than a consummate general; and when the death of the other chiefs opened to him the way to a high com-

[3] Laroch. 95. Jom. iii. 394. Beauch. i. 95.

mand, his ambition and jealousy contributed much to the ruin of the common cause.

Charette, the last of this illustrious band, succeeded to eminence late in the struggle, and when the war had become an affair of posts, rather than a regular contest. He was originally a lieutenant in the navy, and of a feeble and delicate constitution; but the habits of the chase, to which he was passionately attached, and in which he frequently lay for months in the woods, strengthened his frame to such a degree as rendered him capable of enduring any fatigue, and made him intimately acquainted both with the peasantry, and the country which he had occasion to traverse. He was for some days unwilling to place himself at the head of the peasantry, who entreated him to take the command, from a distrust of success with their feeble means; and when he was prevailed on, he showed at once his decision of character, by requiring from them instantaneous submission to his orders, and his spirit of devotion, by taking an oath on the Gospels, at the High Altar of the Church of Machecoult, to be faithful to the cause of God and the throne. His courage was unconquerable, his firmness invincible, his resources unbounded: and long after the conflict had become hopeless in other quarters, he maintained, in the marshes and forests of Lower La Vendée, a desperate struggle. Such was the terror inspired by his achievements, that when he was at the head of only fourteen followers, the Convention offered him a million of francs if he would retire to England; but he refused the bribe, and preferred, even with that inconsiderable band, to wage war with a power to which the Kings of Europe were hastening to make submission.[1] Betrayed at length to his enemies, he met his fate with unshaken firmness, and left the glorious

And Charette.

[1] Th. iv. 175, and viii. 216. Beauch. i. 105, 106. Laroch. 415.

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name of being the last and most indomitable of the Vendéan chiefs.

The troops which these chiefs commanded were divided into three divisions. The first, or the Army of Anjou, under the orders of Bonchamps, composed of twelve thousand men, was destined to combat the Republicans from the side of Angers. The second, called the Grand Army, under the command of D'Elbée, amounted to twenty thousand men, and on important occasions it could be raised to double that amount. The third, called the Army of the Marais, obeyed the orders of Charette, and at one time also was raised to twenty thousand combatants. Besides these, a corps of twelve thousand men was stationed at Montaigut, to observe the garrison of Lucon, and several smaller bodies, amounting in all to three thousand men, kept up the communications between these larger corps.[1]

The forces which they severally commanded

[1] Jom. iii. 388. Laroch. 92. Th. iv. 175, 176.

The early measures of the Convention to crush the insurrection, were marked by the bloody spirit which had so long characterised their proceedings. Orders were despatched, on the first intelligence of the revolt, to the Republican soldiers, to exterminate men, women, children, animals, and vegetation. They sent against them the ruffian bands of the Marsellois, who, on their arrival at Bressuire, immediately exclaimed, that they must begin by massacring the prisoners; and surrounding the prison, put to death eleven peasants, who had been seized in their beds a few days before, on suspicion of being in concert with the insurgents. The fate of these brave men, who were cut down with sabres while on their knees praying to God, and exclaiming "Vive le Roi," excited a universal enthusiasm among the inhabitants. "It is painful," said the Republican Commissioners, "to be obliged to proceed to extremities; but they cannot be avoid-

Savage Orders of the Convention to Extinguish the Revolt.

ed, from the fanaticism of the peasants, who, in no one instance, have been known to betray their landlords. We must cut down the hedges and woods; decimate the inhabitants; send the remainder into the interior of France; and repeople the country by colonies of patriots."[1]

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[1] Bouch. 22, 71, 72, 73.

Nor were these atrocities the work merely of the generals in command. By a solemn decree of the Convention, they were enjoined to proceed with unheard of rigour against the insurgents. By this sanguinary law, " all the persons who have taken any share in the revolts are declared *hors la loi*, and in consequence deprived of trial by jury, and all the privileges accorded by law to accused persons; if taken in arms, they are to be shot within twenty-four hours by a military commission, proceeding on the testimony of a single witness; those who had any share in the revolt, though not taken in arms, shall be subjected to the same mode of trial and punishment; all the priests and nobles, with their families and servants, shall undergo the same punishment; the pain of death shall in all cases draw after it a confiscation of goods, and the same shall hold with those slain in battle, when the corpse is identified before the criminal judges."[2]

[2] Decree, March 19, 1793. Beauch. i. 367.

The Royalists, in no instance in the commencement of the war, resorted to any measures of retaliation, except at Machecoult, where the peasants, as already noticed, immediately after the insurrection, and before Charette had succeeded to the command, exercised the most revolting cruelties. These atrocities, to which the armies of La Vendée proper were ever a stranger, and which were severely repressed by Charette, when he arrived at the command, did incalulable injury to the Royalist cause, by the horror which it inspired in the neighbouring towns.[3] It not

[3] Laroch. 481.

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only prevented the opulent city of Nantes from joining the insurrection, but produced that obstinate resistance on the part of its inhabitants to the attack of Cathelineau, which occasioned the first and greatest of their reverses.

They are defeated at Thouars.

4th May, 1793.

But the Republicans soon found that they had a more formidable enemy to contend with than the unarmed prisoners, on whom their atrocities at Paris had so long been exercised. The first expedition of importance undertaken by the Royalists was against Thouars, which was occupied by General Queteneau, with a division of seven thousand men. A large proportion of the peasants were brought into action for the first time; but their courage supplied the place both of discipline and experience. After a severe fire, the ammunition of the Royalists began to fail, upon which M. de Lescure seized a fusil from a soldier, descended the heights on which his troops were posted, and calling to the soldiers to follow him, rushed over the bridge which led to the city. A tremendous discharge of grape and musketry deterred even the bravest of his followers, and he stood alone amidst the smoke; he returned to his companions, and exhorted them to follow him, and again tried the perilous pass; but again he stood alone, his clothes riddled with balls. At this moment Henri de Larochejaquelein came up, and along with Foret, and a single peasant, advanced to support their heroic comrade; all four rushed over the bridge, followed by the soldiers, who now closely pursued their steps, assailed and carried the barricades, while Bonchamps, who had discovered a ford at a short distance, destroyed a body of the National Guard who defended it, and drove the Republicans back to the town. Its ancient walls could not long resist the fury of the victors; Henri de Larochejaquelein, by

mounting on the shoulders of a soldier, reached the top of the rampart, helped up the boldest of his followers, and speedily the town was carried. Six thousand prisoners, twelve cannons, and twenty caisons, fell into the hands of the Royalists. Though strongly inclined to Republican principles, and stained by the massacre of the Royalists in the preceding August, the city underwent none of the horrors which usually await a place taken by assault; not an inhabitant was maltreated, nor a house pillaged; the peasants flocked to the churches to return thanks to God; and amused themselves with burning the tree of Liberty, and the papers of the Municipality.[1]

[1] Jom. iii. 394. Laroch. 108, 112. Bonch. 27, 28. Beauch. i. 161, 163.

Encouraged by this success, the Vendéans advanced against Chataignerie, which was garrisoned by four thousand Republicans. By a vigorous attack it was carried, and the garrison, after sustaining severe losses, with difficulty escaped to Fontenay. Thither they were followed by the Royalists; but the strength of the army melted away during the advance; great numbers of the peasants returned to cultivate their fields, and place their families in a place of security; and when the army came in sight of Fontenay, they only mustered ten thousand combatants. With this force they assailed the town; but though M. de Lescure and Larochejaquelein penetrated into the suburbs, the Royalists were defeated on other sides, with the loss of twenty-four pieces of cannon, including the celebrated Marie Jeanne, so much the object of their veneration; and the victorious wing with difficulty drew off their artillery from the place.[2] This first check spread the deepest dejection through the army; Marie Jeanne, their favourite cannon, was taken; they had now only six pieces left; the ammunition was exhausted; the soldiers had only a single cartridge

5th May.

15th May. Storming of Chataignerie, and Fontenay.

[2] Jom. iii. 395. Laroch. 116, 117. Beauch. i. 171, 173.

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remaining for each musket; and they were returning in numbers to their villages. In this extremity, the firmness of the chiefs restored the fortune of the war; they instantly took their determination; fell back to Chataignerie, spoke cheerfully to the peasants, declared that the reverse was a punishment of Heaven for some disorders committed by the troops, and sent orders to the priests in the interior to send forward, without delay, all the strength of their parishes.[1]

[1] Laroch. 119. Lac. xi. 26. Beauch. i. 173.

An unexpected incident at this period contributed in a powerful manner to ~~reverse~~ the Royalist cause. An Abbé, who had been seized by the Republicans, made his escape to the insurgents, declared that he was the Bishop of Agra, and arrived at Chatillon on the very day of the defeat. The peasants, overjoyed at having a bishop amongst them, flew to receive his benediction, and flocked in multitudes, full of confidence, singing Psalms and Litanies, to rejoin the army. Thirty-five thousand were speedily assembled, and the Royalist leaders lost no time in taking advantage of their enthusiasm to repair the late disaster. Bonchamps commanded the right, Cathelineau the centre, and d'Elbée the left, while Henri Larochejaquelein led the small but determined band of horsemen. On the following day they returned to Fontenay, where the Republicans, ten thousand strong, with forty pieces of cannon, were drawn up on the outside of the town to receive them. The Royalist army received absolution on their knees; and M. de Lescure addressed them in these words:—"Let us advance, my sons; we have no powder; we can only retake the cannon with our staffs; Marie Jeanne must be rescued; she will be the prize of the swiftest of foot amongst you." The peasants answered with acclamations; but when they approached the Republi-

Bishop of Agra.

Great Effect of that Incident.

can guns, the severity of the fire made the bravest hesitate. Upon this M. de Lescure advanced above thirty paces before his men, directly in front of a battery of six pieces, which was discharging grape with the utmost violence, stood there, took off his hat, exclaimed "Vive le Roi!" and slowly returned to the troops. His clothes were pierced, his spurs carried away, his boots torn, but he himself still unwounded. "My friends," said he, "you see the Blues do not know how to fire." This decided the peasants; they rushed forward with rapidity; but before they reached the battery a new incident arrested their course; they perceived on an eminence a cross, and the whole soldiers instantly fell on their knees, under the fire of the cannon. An officer wished to raise them. "Allow them," said Lescure, "to pray to God, they will not fight the worse for it." In effect, a moment after, the men sprung up, and rushed forward, armed with staffs, and the butt-end of their muskets, with such resolution, to the cannon mouths, that the artillery-men deserted them, and fled in confusion towards the town. Meanwhile, M. de Bonchamps, who had skilfully disposed his right wing in an oblique order, pushed forward with his men, and threw in so murderous a fire, at the distance of fifty paces, that on his side also the Republicans gave way, and the victory was complete. The victors and fugitives entered together into the town, headed by Lescure, who was the first man within the gates. No sooner was he there than he used all his efforts to save the vanquished, incessantly exclaiming, "Lay down your arms; quarter to the vanquished." Forty pieces of cannon, several thousand muskets, ammunition, and stores in abundance, rewarded this the greatest triumph of the Royalist arms, who sustained no serious loss excepting that arising

Victory over the Republicans at Fontenay.

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from a wound of Bonchamps, who was shot by a traitor to whom he had just given his life. It was not the least part of their success, in the estimation of the peasants, that they retook Marie Jeanne, which was rescued from the Republicans by Foret, who, with his own hand, slew two gensdarmes who guarded it. The enthusiasm excited by the recovery of this favourite piece of artillery was unbounded. Filled with joy, the peasants threw themselves on their knees, embraced their favourite cannon, covered it with branches, flowers, and garlands, and themselves drew it into the market-place in Fontenay, preparatory to its removal to a place of security in the Bocage.[1]

[1] Laroch. 122, 123, 125. Bonch. 33, 35. Lac. xii. 28, 29. Beauch. i. 175, 178, 179.

The Royalists were much perplexed with the course to be pursued with the prisoners, to the number of many thousands, who were now in their hands. To retain them in custody was impossible, for they had no fortified places; to follow the example of the Republicans, and murder them, was out of the question. At length it was determined to shave their heads and send them back to the Republicans; a resolution, the execution of which caused no small merriment to the soldiers. After the success at Fontenay, it was proposed to advance to Niort, where all the Republican troops of the neighbourhood were assembled; but the peasants returned so rapidly to their homes that it was found to be impossible. In four-and-twenty hours after the capture of the town, three-fourths of the army had returned to the Bocage, to recount their exploits to their agitated families. It was resolved therefore to withdraw from their conquest, which was an indefensible post, in the midst of a hostile territory, and in a few days the whole army re-entered the Bocage.[2]

[2] Beauch. i. 195, 196. Laroch. 127.

Meanwhile, equal success had attended the arms of

the Vendéans in other quarters. Cathelineau, Stofflet, and Charette, had defeated all the Republican bodies which attempted to penetrate into the parts of La Vendée where they commanded, and the latter had made himself master of the Isle of Noirmoutier. Successful combats took place at Vetiers and Douè, and Montreuil, which all tended to elevate the spirit of the troops; and it was at length resolved to unite all their forces for the attack of the important city of Saumur, where the Convention, who were now making the most vigorous efforts to check the insurrection, had collected twenty-two thousand regular troops, besides a great number of National Guards.[1]

Repeated Successes of the Royalists.

[1] Lac. xii. 30. 31. Jom. iii. 398. Beauch. i. 197, 228, 232.

The Royalist army, forty thousand strong, approached Saumur on the 10th June. The Republican army had taken post in a fortified camp which surrounded the town. Their left rested on the heights in front of the old castle, their right on Saint Florent, while formidable batteries lined all the intermediate space between these points. Field-works had been thrown up, and in many places redoubts completed, to strengthen their intrenched camp, which covered the whole space running through the heights from the broad and deep stream of the Thouet to the banks of the Loire. Sixteen thousand men, and nearly one hundred pieces of cannon, were assembled in that important post, which commanded one of the chief passages over that great river.[2]

[2] Beauch. i. 198, 199.

While the chiefs were deliberating about the best mode of attacking this formidable camp, the Vendéans, of their own accord, engaged in the attack. Such was the ardour of the troops, in consequence of some successful skirmishes in which the advanced guard was engaged, that the whole army precipitated itself upon the town without waiting for the command of their

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leaders. This tumultuous assault, without any orders, was little calculated to ensure success; M. de Lescure was wounded; the sight of his blood, whom they believed invulnerable, shook the courage of the soldiers, and a charge of cuirassiers completed their disorder. The peasants, seeing that their balls could not pierce these steel-clad enemies, fled in confusion, and were only rallied by M. de Lescure behind some overturned waggons, which formed a barricade in the line of their flight. The Royalist leaders, as well as the confusion would admit, now took measures to attack in regular form. Stofflet and Cathelineau directed their forces against the heights, and made a feint against the castle; while Lescure put himself at the head of the left wing to assault the bridge of Fouchard, and turn the redoubts of Bournan; and Henri de Larochejaquelein marched with his division towards the meadows of Varrins, to storm on that side the intrenched camp. While Lescure was rallying his men behind the waggons, Henri de Larochejaquelein assailed the Republican camp on the other side, where it was protected by a rampart and ditch. Finding that the soldiers hesitated to cross the fosse, he took off his hat, threw it into the ditch, and exclaiming, "Who will get it for me?" plunged in himself, and was the first to seize it, followed by the soldiers, who now broke through in great numbers, escaladed the rampart, and entered the town. Followed by sixty foot-soldiers, he traversed the streets, crossed the bridges of the Loire, planted cannon on them to prevent the return of the Republicans, and pursued them for a considerable distance on the road to Tours. General Coustard, who commanded the Republicans on the heights of Bournan, was now cut off from all communication with the remainder of the army, and he

June 10. Their great Victory at Saumur.

took the bold resolution to enter Saumur, taking the victorious Royalists in rear. For this purpose, it was necessary to cross the bridge, where the Vendéans had established a battery, which commanded the passage. Coustard ordered a regiment of cuirassiers, supported by the volunteers of Orleans, to storm the battery. "Where are you sending us?" said the soldiers. "To death," replied Coustard; "the safety of the Republic requires it." The brave cuirassiers charged at the gallop, and carried the guns; but the Orleans volunteers disbanded under the fire, and they were forced to relinquish them to the Royalists. While these advantages were gained on their side, M. de Lescure had succeeded in rallying his soldiers, who, by falling on their faces when the artillery was discharged, succeeded in capturing the redoubts opposed to them, while Stofflet broke into the town, and completed the victory.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 31, 32. Jom. iii. 396. Laroch. 137. 138. 141. Th. v. 50. Beauch. i. 204, 208.

The trophies of the Vendéans in this great victory, by far more important than any yet gained over the Republicans by the Allied Sovereigns, were eighty pieces of cannon, ten thousand muskets, and eleven thousand prisoners, with the loss only of sixty men killed, and four hundred wounded. On the following day, the castle surrendered, with fourteen hundred men, and all the artillery which it contained, and gave them the command of both banks of the Loire. The Royalists shaved the heads of their prisoners, and sent them back to the Republicans on no other condition than that of not again serving against La Vendée; an illusory condition, speedily violated by the bad faith of their antagonists. This humanity was the more remarkable,[2] as at this period the Republicans had already commenced their inhuman system

[2] Laroch. 141. Lac. xii. 32, 33.

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of massacring their prisoners, and all taken in arms against the Convention.

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After the capture of Saumur, the opinion of the Council of Generals was divided as to the course which they should pursue; but at length they were determined by the consideration of the great advantages of the possession of Nantes, which would open up a communication with England, and serve as a depôt and base for future operations up the course of the Loire, and, in consequence, it was resolved to adopt this plan. This resolution in the end proved fatal to the Royalist cause, by turning their Grand Army from the road to Paris, where it might have arrived, and stifled the Reign of Blood in its cradle, in the first moments of alarm, following the taking of Saumur; but it, nevertheless, was ably conceived, in a military point of view, as it was evident that the course of the Loire formed the line of the Royalist operations, and that Nantes was indispensable to their security. The day after the battle, M. Bonchamps arrived with his division, five thousand strong, while two noble young men, Charles Beaumont d'Autichamp, and the Prince of Talmont, also joined the Royalist cause; at the same time, the supreme command was given by the Council of Generals, to the peasant, Cathelineau; a striking proof of the disinterested magnanimity, which distinguished the noble chiefs of the army,—while, by a strange contrast, Biron, a peer of France, and son of a marshal, led the Republican forces.[1]

Cathelineau created Commander-in-Chief.

[1] Lac. xii. 125. Beauch. i. 210—212. 215, 219. Th. v. 50. Jom. iii. 397, 399.

M. Bonchamps, who was gifted with the true military genius, strongly urged a descent into Brittany, to obtain a communication with the ocean, and thereafter an immediate advance to Paris; and, if this plan could have been adopted, it might have led to incalculable results. But the other leaders, though brave

and able men, were not equally penetrated with the necessity of striking at the decisive moment at the heart of their enemies; and, besides, great difficulty was anticipated in prevailing on the peasants to undertake so distant an expedition, or believe that any thing could be required of them beyond the sight of their beloved Bocage. It was resolved, therefore, to descend the Loire to Nantes, in order to secure a firm footing on the sea-coast, and open a communication with England; after which, it was thought, more distant operations might, with more safety, be attempted.[1]

[1] Th. v. 66, 67.

A garrison having been left in Saumur, to maintain the passage of the Loire, the Grand Army under Cathelineau, after occupying Angers, which was hastily abandoned by the Republicans, advanced towards Nantes, by the right bank of the river, while Charette, who had twenty thousand men under his command, was invited to co-operate in the attempt on the left. During the march, however, the ardour of the peasants was sensibly diminished; they had been long absent from home, and lamented the interruption of their agricultural labours; nor could any thing persuade them, that, after having gained so many victories, it was necessary to attempt the reduction of so distant a place as Nantes. Great numbers left their colours, and returned to their fields; and when the main army approached that city, it hardly amounted to ten thousand combatants. The hour of attack was fixed at two o'clock on the morning of the 29th June; and Charette, on his side, commenced the assault at that hour; but the army of Cathelineau having been detained ten hours before the little town of Niort, did not arrive till ten. They were there arrested by a few hundred of the National Guard, who

The Royalists defeated in their attempt on Nantes.

29th June.

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fought with heroic valour. Notwithstanding this delay, the united forces commenced the attack with great vigour, and Cathelineau had actually penetrated, at the head of the bravest of his troops, into the town, when on the Place Viarmis, he was severely wounded by a ball in the breast. The peasants, in despair, carried him out of the town, and abandoned all the advantages they had gained; and although the combat continued for eighteen hours, the want of a leader rendered the courage of the soldiers of no avail, and the enterprise failed.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 127. Laroch. 153, 155. Th. v. 69, 70. Beauch. i. 238—248.

This check proved extremely prejudicial to the Vendéan cause. The army was dissolved in an instant. The brave Cathelineau was disabled by his wound; officers, soldiers, hastily threw themselves into boats and recrossed the Loire; the right bank was entirely deserted, and the men in groups of twenty and thirty straggled homewards. After an interval of a fortnight, Cathelineau expired of his wound, to the inexpressible regret of both the chiefs and soldiers, and carried with him to the grave the best hopes of the re-establishment of the Royalist cause. The death of the commander was announced by a peasant to the anxious group who surrounded the house where he breathed his last, in these simple words:—"The good Cathelineau has restored his spirit to Him who gave it, to avenge his glory."[2]

July 14.

[2] Laroch. 156, 174. Beauch. i. 252, 253.

While these events were in progress on the side of Nantes, a formidable invasion by disciplined troops and able generals was defeated in the Bocage. Westerman, the celebrated chief of the insurgents, on the 10th August, having organized what he called a German Legion, from soldiers trained in the regular wars on the Rhenish frontier, and entertaining the most supreme contempt for the insurgents, penetrated,

during the absence of the Grand Army of the Royalists at Nantes, into the heart of La Vendée. He made himself master in the first instance of Parthenay and Amaillou, which he reduced to ashes, and burnt Clisson, the chateau of M. de Lescure. The leaders fled to Chatillon, where the Supreme Royalist Council was assembled; but this last refuge was soon after invaded by Westerman, who burnt to the ground the castle of La Darbelliere, the domain of M. de Larochejaquelein. But here terminated the success of this rash enterprise. M. de Lescure had apprized the other chiefs of the danger, who were now advancing, by forced marches, to his aid. Stofflet and Bonchamps arrived with their divisions, while the tocsin roused the inhabitants of the surrounding parishes; and an able attack, directed by Lescure, who was perfectly acquainted with the country, proved completely successful. In little more than an hour, two-thirds of Westerman's army were destroyed; and the fugitives who escaped, owed their salvation to the humanity of the very general whose chateau they had just burned. Westerman, with the utmost difficulty, escaped out of the Bocage, with a few followers, and was in the end sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and perished on the scaffold.[1]

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June 20.

July 3.

[1] Th. v. 121, 122. Beauch. i. 257-264.

After Cathelineau's death, M. d'Elbée was appointed generalissimo, and the utmost efforts of all the chiefs exerted to reassemble the army. Such was the disinterestedness of the other leaders, that Bonchamps, qualified above all others for the situation, made his own officers vote for his rival. Meanwhile, Biron, having collected fifty thousand troops, commenced a regular invasion of the Bocage in four divisions, extending from the Loire to the Sevre. This invasion was at first attended with success: the Royalists, with

[CHAP. XII.

1793. twenty-five thousand men, attacked General Labaroliere, who, with fifteen thousand, was established at Martigne Briand; but after an obstinate engagement,

Aug. 13. they were defeated, and retired to Coron. Thither they were pursued by Santerre, who deemed himself now secure of conquest: but a dreadful reverse awaited them. The tocsin was sounded in all the parishes; the Curate of St Laud, who eminently distinguished himself in the war, collected all the forces of the neighbouring districts; and on the 17th the Republicans were attacked, while marching in column on the high-road, in front and flank at the same time, and driven back in the utmost disorder towards Saumur and Chinoni, with the loss of ten thousand men, and all their artillery, baggage, and ammunition.[1]

July 17.

[1] Jom. iii. 400, 401. Beauch. i. 278, 288, 297.

Soon after, M. d'Elbée, with Charette, attacked a corps of fifteen thousand men at Lucon; but although success at first attended the Royalists, they were ultimately defeated, with the loss of fifteen hundred men and eighteen pieces of cannon; the greatest disaster experienced since the commencement of the war. It was chiefly owing to have followed, on M. Lescure's advice, a plan of attack, which, though admirably adapted for regular troops, was not suited to the desultory and impetuous mode of warfare adopted by the peasantry. The whole artillery of the Royalists would have fallen into the hands of the Republicans, had not Larochejaquelein, at the head of sixty of the bravest of his followers, by prodigies of valour, arrested the pursuit at the bridge of Dissay.[2]

Aug. 13.

[2] Laroch. i. 194. Jom. iv. 290.

General Invasion of the Bocage on all sides.

Encouraged by this success, the armies of the Convention, now greatly reinforced by the efforts of the Government, on all sides invaded the Bocage. Santerre, fatally celebrated in the Revolution, advanced at the head of powerful bodies of regular soldiers;

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Chantonnay was occupied, and the country wherever they penetrated, devastated with fire and sword; even the farm-houses and the mills were consumed, in obedience to the orders of the Convention. But a severe retribution was awaiting them. The Royalists sounded the tocsin in all the parishes, and having reassembled the peasants, made a combined and skilful attack on the Republican force, seven thousand strong, in the neighbourhood of Chantonnay. It proved completely successful, chiefly in consequence of the valour of the division of Bonchamps, which, not having shared in the preceding reverses, had preserved all its wonted enthusiasm; the Republicans were routed, with the loss of all their artillery and baggage; and such was the carnage, that scarce eighteen hundred could be reassembled after the battle, and Santerre himself narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy.[1] At the same time Charette maintained an obstinate contest in Lower La Vendée; and though frequently defeated, never suffered himself to be discouraged by his reverses, and destroyed several Republican columns that endeavoured to penetrate into his district.

Sept. 5.

[1] Jom. iii. 247, 402. Laroch. 195. Beauch. ii. 7. Lac. xii. 129.

Arrival of the Garrison of Mayence.

But the Convention, which was at last wakened to a full sense of the danger of the war, were now collecting forces on all sides to crush the insurgents. The garrison of Mayence, fourteen thousand strong, commanded by Kleber, and which the Allies, with culpable negligence, had not made prisoners of war, and only bound not to combat the Allies for a year, was despatched by post to the scene of action; and great part of the garrisons of Valenciennes and Condé, which had been restored on the same condition, soon followed in the same direction. Not only the National Guards, but the *levée en masse* of the neighbouring

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departments, were assembled; and before the middle of September, upwards of 200,000 men surrounded La Vendée on all sides; and by a simultaneous advance, threatened to crush its revolt. To oppose this formidable invasion, the Royalists were divided into four divisions, that in the neighbourhood of Nantes under the command of Charette, that on the banks of the Loire under Bonchamps; M. de Larochejaquelein in Anjou, and M. de Lescure in Eastern Poitou, while D'Elbée retained the supreme command.[1]

[1] Jom. iii. 300. Laroch. 197. 200. Beauch. ii. 21, and i. 313.

Able design of Bonchamps, which is not adopted.

The plan which Bonchamps strenuously recommended, and which bears the marks of great military genius, was to allow the enemy to penetrate, in detached columns, into the Bocage; to overwhelm them successively by a junction of the Royalist forces in that district, who occupied a central position, and to take advantage of the first moment of alarm, cross the Loire, rouse the Royalist population of Brittany, and nourish the war from the resources of an hitherto untouched country. "What fortunate accident," said he, has made us acquainted with the designs of the enemy? In it I see clearly the hand of God for the safety of La Vendée. The Republicans have at length discovered the secret of our victories; they wish to concentrate their forces to overwhelm us by their mass. We may, indeed, repulse the army of Mayence; but will it not return to the charge, with accumulated numbers, and resistless force? Let us then anticipate the enemy. Brittany calls us; let us march, and extend our destinies. Let us no longer be deceived by the hope that the Coalesced Powers will restore the monarchy; that glory is reserved for us alone. Masters of a harbour on the ocean, we will find the Princes Royal at our head, and we will at length acquire that political consistence,[2] without which we cannot hope

[2] Jom. iv. 300. Beauch. ii. 26, 27. Laroch. 199.

for durable success." D'Elbée combated the latter part of the project as too hazardous in the irregular state of the army; and, after a long discussion, it was resolved to remain on the defensive in La Vendée.

It was the army of Charette which first found itself assailed by the immense forces of the Republicans. The Vendéans were there attacked by the redoubtable garrison of Mayence, which crossed the Loire, and invaded the country on the 10th September. The Royalists were defeated in several encounters, and driven back by this invasion. Bonchamps was defeated near the rocks of Erigny, while Lescure experienced a check at Thouars, and the whole Lower Poitou was wasted with fire and sword, notwithstanding the utmost exertions of Charette. The successive retreat of these columns, however, brought the Royalist forces nearer each other; and a simultaneous effort was made by all their forces. D'Elbée, and Bonchamps, who had now recovered from his wound, having united thirty thousand men, and the army having received the benediction of the Curate of St Laud, and heard high mass at midnight, they attacked the Republicans at daybreak on the 19th September. The Royalists were forty thousand strong; the Republicans somewhat less numerous, but they embraced the garrison of Mayence, the best soldiers in France. All the chiefs felt that this invasion must, at all hazards, be repelled, and that the moment had arrived, when they must conquer or die. Charette, certain of the co-operation of the other generals, had arranged his forces in order of battle, blocking up the road to Torfou. His defeated and discouraged troops, however, could not long withstand the shock of the veterans of Kleber; they were broken, and falling into confusion, when M. de Lescure, seeing affairs wellnigh desperate, exclaimed

Defeat of the Republicans at Torfou.

19th Sept.

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—"Are there not four hundred men brave enough to die with me?" The peasants of the parish of Echaubroignies, seventeen hundred strong, answered him with shouts, and this feeble division withstood the shock of the Republican forces for two hours, till the division of Bonchamps arrived. This reinforcement speedily changed the face of affairs; the peasants, dispersed in single file, behind the hedges which enveloped the Republicans, kept up a murderous fire on every side; the cannon were carried by assault, and the whole army thrown into confusion. Nothing but the heroic devotion of Colonel Chouardin, and his regiment, who maintained the bridge of Boussay, and suffered themselves to be wholly destroyed before they abandoned it, preserved the invading army from total destruction.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 302, 303. Laroch. 213, 214. Beauch. ii. 34—41.

Still the Royalists had not a moment to lose; it was indispensable to attack immediately the corps of General Beysser, which was on the point of effecting a junction with the forces of Kleber. On the day after their victory at Torfou, they surprised him at Montaigu, and routed the Republicans entirely, with the loss of all their artillery, baggage, and ammunition. This was followed by the surprise and total defeat of General Mukinski at St Fulgent, by Charette and Lescure, while, on the very same day, Bonchamps and D'Elb e assailed the retreating columns of General Kleber, encumbered with twelve hundred chariots, and after throwing them into confusion, captured a large portion of their baggage; but this success, though considerable, was nothing to what would have been obtained, had the whole Royalists forces been united, as they should have been, against the formidable bands of Mayence.[2]

Sept. 20.

Sept. 22.

[2] Laroch. 215. 217. Jom. iv. 303, 304. Beauch. ii. 42-44.

In other quarters the Vendéans were equally suc-

cessful. General Rossignol, with fifteen thousand men, indeed, defeated an ill-concerted attack of the Royalist chiefs Talmont and Autichamp; but having, after this success, advanced with Santerre to Coron, he was there attacked by Piron and Larochejaquelein, who had succeeded in rousing all the population in the neighbouring parishes; and with such skill were the Royalist operations conducted, that the Republican army was pierced in the centre, and entirely dispersed, twenty-four pieces of cannon and all their ammunition taken. Immediately after this success, a detachment of the Royalist forces were despatched against General Duhoux, who had crossed the bridge of Cé, and was driving the Vendéan detachments before him; but no sooner had he arrived at the heights of St Lambert, than he was assailed by the bulk of the Royalist forces, while Bernier, a farmer's servant in the parish of St Lambert, swam across the river, and attacked them in rear with the armed peasants in his vicinity. The rout soon was complete; all the artillery of the invaders was taken, and their column, nine thousand strong, totally destroyed. Such was the terror produced by these defeats, that the *levée en masse* assembled between Tours and Poitiers, dispersed without striking a blow, and the regular forces of the Republicans, on all sides, quitted the Vendéan territory.[1]

Sept. 15. Defeat of General Rossignol at Coron.

Sept. 18

[1] Jom. iv. 304–307. Laroch. 202–210. Beauch. ii. 28–32.

Thus, by a series of most brilliant military combinations, seconded by the most heroic exertions on the part of the peasants, was the invasion of six armies, amounting to 100,000 regular troops, part of whom were the best soldiers of France, defeated, and losses inflicted on the Republicans, incomparably greater than they had suffered from all the Allies put together since the commencement of the war; a striking

General Defeat of the Republican Invasion.

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proof of the admirable skill with which their chiefs had availed themselves of their central position and peculiar mode of fighting to crush the invading forces, and a memorable instance of what can be effected by resolute men, even without the advantages of regular organization, if ably conducted, against the most formidable superiority of military force.

But the Vendéans had to contend with a redoubtable adversary, and unfortunately the invading army, from which most was to be apprehended, was that which had suffered least from their attacks. The Convention made the most vigorous efforts to meet the danger. Barrere, in a report to the Convention, declared "The inexplicable La Vendée still exists; twenty times since this rebellion broke out have your representatives, your generals, the committee itself, declared that it was stifled, and yet it exists more formidable than ever. We thought we could destroy it; the tocsin sounded in all the neighbouring departments; a prodigious number of armed citizens were assembled to crush the insurrection; and a sudden panic has dissolved the whole like a cloud. You must change your system; one despotic chief must head your armies; a term must be put to the existence of the brigands. Like the Giant in the fable, which was no longer invincible but when he touched the earth, you must sever them from their native soil before you can destroy them." In pursuance of this suggestion, General Lechelle was appointed Generalissimo; the Brest fleet was ordered to sail to co-operate with the armies; and a proclamation was addressed to the troops, enjoining them to exterminate the Vendéans before the 20th of October.[1]

Vigorous exertions of the Government at Paris.

[1] Jom. iv. 308, 309. Beauch. ii. 56, 57. Laroch. 218.

Meanwhile the peasants, as usual, seeing the present danger over, returned to their homes; the stan-

dards of the generals were almost deserted. *Te Deum* was sung in all the parishes, amidst the joyful acclamations of the inhabitants. M. de Lescure, at the ceremony in his own parish church, knelt behind a column to withdraw himself from the admiring gaze of his countrymen. On learning the massacres which the Republicans were making of their countrymen who had been made prisoners, and which were commanded by the decrees of the Convention, forbidding them to give quarter, the Royalist soldiers loudly demanded reprisals upon the numerous captives who were in their hands; but the leaders expressed such horror at the proposal, that they always succeeded in preventing it from being carried into effect. The formidable bands of Mayence, at this time, were so much disgusted with the savage proceedings of the Convention, that they offered, if their pay was guaranteed, to join themselves in a body to the Royalist cause; but the large sum required for this purpose, amounting to 400,000 francs, joined to the suspicions of the Royalists that some treachery was intended, rendered a design abortive, which, if executed, would have given a decisive preponderance to the Vendéan forces.[1]

[1] Beauch. ii. 50–52, 66. Laroch. 218, 219.

Ruinous divisions of the Royalists.

Unfortunately at this time, when their enemies were concentrating under one able hand, the whole of the Vendéan war, the Royalist chiefs, divided about the points to which their forces should be directed, separated their troops, Charette drawing off towards the island of Noirmoutiers, while Lescure and Beaurepaire took post near Chatillon to make head against Westerman, who was advancing with a powerful force, massacring, without distinction, all the inhabitants, and burning every edifice that his soldiers could reach. Lescure, Stofflet, and Larochejaquelein, united, had

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October 7.

October 12.

[1] Jom. iv. 312, 313. Laroch 221. 227—229. Beauch. ii. 58. 61. 73—75.

Fresh Invasion by the Republicans.

Hardly was this invasion repulsed, when the Vendéans were called on to make head against a more formidable enemy in another quarter. The redoubtable bands of Mayence, reinforced by several other divisions, in all forty thousand strong, were advancing into the very heart of the country, and had already nearly reached Cholet, while the unhappy divisions of the Vendéan chiefs detained in other quarters a large proportion of their forces. Notwithstanding the most urgent representations from the other lead-

October 14.

ers, Charette persisted in his system of separate operations, and wasted his force in a fruitless expedition to the Isle of Noirmoutiers. Lescure and Bonchamps, however, hastened to support M. de Royrand, who was flying before the invaders. It was arranged that the former should await the enemy in front, while the latter should, by a circuitous route, assail them in flank. But the Republicans having advanced more slowly than was expected, Lescure came up with them before Bonchamps was ready to support him, and though they yielded in the first instance to the furious attack of the Vendéans, yet the inferiority of their force, and a desperate charge in flank made by Beaupuy when disordered by success, threw them into confusion, and they fell back to Beaupreau, while the Republicans bivouacked on the field of battle. The next day the victorious army entered Cholet, which the discouraged Vendéans could not be prevailed on to defend. The Royalist loss was not severe; but they sustained an irreparable misfortune in a wound of M. Lescure, who was shot through the head when leading on his men, as usual, at the commencement of the action. The wound proved mortal after several weeks of suffering, which he endured with the heroism and sweetness of his character.[1]

Royalists Defeated, and M. de Lescure mortally wounded.

[1] Jom. iv. 314. Laroch. 229, 230. Beauch. ii. 75. 78—83.

The Vendéans were cruelly discouraged by this disaster; the more so, as the enemy's columns had now penetrated the country in every direction, and the ravages they had committed gave no hope of maintaining the contest longer in their native land. It was resolved, therefore, to cross the Loire, and carry the war into Brittany; but, previous to this, it was deemed advisable by all the chiefs to make one desperate effort to crush the invading force in the neighbourhood of Cholet. The action took place two days

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after, and was contested with the utmost fury on both sides. The forces were nearly equal, the Royalists having forty thousand men, and the Republicans forty-one thousand; but the latter were greatly superior in their artillery, which consisted of thirty pieces, and cavalry, which amounted to three thousand men, and the infantry included the best troops in France.[1] The combat was felt on both sides to be what in effect proved decisive of the fate of the war.

[1] Jom. iv. 315. Beauch. ii. 84, 85. Lac. xi 137.

Battle of Cholet. October 17.

At three in the morning on the 17th October, the sound of artillery awakened the army, and the soldiers hastened to hear grand mass from the curate of the village where the headquarters were placed. The ceremony was performed by torchlight; the priest, in fervid and eloquent terms, besought them to combat courageously for their God, their King, and their children, and concluded by giving absolution to the armed multitude. The darkness of the scene, and the discharges of cannon which interrupted his discourse, filled all hearts with a gloomy presentiment of the disasters which were about to follow. The Republicans were drawn up in three divisions, the garrison of Mayence, with the cavalry, forming the reserve. On the Royalist side, Stofflet commanded the left, D'Elbée and Bonchamps the centre, and Larochejaquelein the right.[2]

[2] Jom. iv. 316. Beauch. ii. 85—87. Laroch. 232.

The action commenced at ten o'clock. On this occasion the Vendéans marched for the first time in close column, like troops of the line, but they had no artillery. Henri de Larochejaquelein and Stofflet, after a short exchange of bullets, precipitated themselves on the centre of the enemy, routed it by the vehemence of their attack, and drove it back in disorder into the town of Cholet, where the great park of artillery was captured. The battle seemed to be lost, and the Republicans, panic-struck by the furious on-

set of their enemies, were flying on all sides, when Lechelle, as a last resource, ordered his cavalry to charge, and the reserve, composed of the garrison of Mayence, to advance. The charge of horse took place from right to left through the whole Royalist army, now disordered by the rapidity of their attack, and at the same time the iron bands of Mayence emerged through the fugitives, and checked the pursuit of the victors. In an instant the face of the action was changed; the Vendéans, seized with a sudden panic, fled on all sides, and the exultation of victory was succeeded by the terrors of defeat. In this extremity, Henri de Larochejaquelein, D'Elbee, and Bonchamps, collected two hundred of the bravest of their troops, and by their heroic resistance not only gave time to the Royalists to escape, but drove back the victorious squadrons of the enemy; but their valour proved fatal to the two latter, who were mortally wounded in the middle of the charge. Larochejaquelein, with great difficulty, collected five thousand men, with which he carried off the wounded remains of his gallant comrades to Beaupreau, where they passed the night; while the remainder of the army fled towards the Loire, and without any orders commenced the passage of the river.[1]

Royalists defeated, and D'Elbée and Bonchamps mortally Wounded.

[1] Jom. iv. 316. Laroch. 236, 237. Beauch. ii. 86—91. Bonch. 49. Lac. xi. 137.

This defeat proved highly injurious to the Vendean cause; not only by the confusion and depression which it had occasioned among the troops, but the irreparable loss which they sustained in the two most distinguished of their generals. The gallant Bonchamps was carried by his weeping soldiers to St Florent, where the Vendeans, worked up to madness by the conflagration of all their towns, and the massacre of their families, demanded, with loud cries, the immediate destruction of five thousand prisoners, who

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were confined in the town. The intelligence of the wound of Bonchamps, redoubled their fury, and nothing seemed capable of saving the unhappy captives. Already the cannon, loaded with grape-shot, were turned on the helpless crowd of captives, whose destruction to all appearance was inevitable. Meanwhile, the officers of his army, on their knees, by his bedside, awaited with trembling anxiety the report of the surgeon; their downcast and weeping countenances soon told him that there was no hope; while the cries of the soldiers from without announced the imminent peril of the prisoners. Instantly Bonchamps seized D'Autichamps, who knelt beside his couch, by the hand, and besought him immediately to fly and convey to the soldiers his last orders to save the captives. He quickly ran to fulfil the humane mission, but the soldiers were in such a state of exasperation that nothing but the announcement of Bonchamps' entreaties could arrest the uplifted arm of destruction. At length, however, they listened to his entreaties; the guns were turned aside, and the prisoners saved. Meanwhile, Bonchamps gave with calmness his last orders, and especially commanded that the lives of all the captives should be saved; several times before he expired he anxiously enquired whether this had been done, and expressed the utmost satisfaction when he was informed that they were secure. He was fortunate enough to receive the last consolations of religion from two venerable ecclesiastics, who soothed his dying hours by the promises granted to devotion and humanity: "Yes," said he, "I dare to hope for the divine mercy; I have not acted from pride, or the desire of a glory which perishes in eternity; I have tried only to overturn the rule of impiety and blood;[1] I have not been able to

Humanity of Bonchamps to the Prisoners.

[1] Bonch. 52, 53. Laroch. 241. Beauch. ii. 96, 97.

restore the throne, but I have at least defended the cause of God, my King, and my country; and He has in mercy enabled me to pardon"— Here the voice of the hero failed, and he expired amidst the sobs of all who witnessed the scene.

Atrocious Cruelty of the Republicans.

While the last moments of the Royalist chief were ennobled by an act of mercy, the triumph of the Republicans was stained by unrelenting and uncalled for cruelty. The towns of Beaupreau and Cholet were burnt to the ground; the inhabitants of every age and sex put to the sword, and the trophies of victory reared on the blood-soaked ruins of their murdered countrymen's dwellings. "The National Convention," said the Representatives, Bourbotte and Turreau, in their report to the Assembly, "have decreed that the war in La Vendée should be concluded by the end of October; and we may now say with truth that La Vendée no longer exists. A profound solitude reigns in the country recently occupied by the rebels; you may travel far in those districts without meeting either a living creature or a dwelling; for, with the exception of Cholet, Saint Florent, and some little towns, where the number of patriots greatly exceeds that of the Royalists, we have left behind us nothing but ashes and piles of dead."[1]

[1] Guerres des Vend. ii. 287. Jom. iv. 318.

Dreadful Passage of the Loire.

Meanwhile, the whole Vendéan forces, with the exception of those under Charette, flocked to Saint Florent, with the design of hastening over the Loire. No words can do justice to the horrors of the scene which presented itself: eighty thousand persons, of whom little more than one-half were armed, filled the semicircular valley, which extends from the base of the heights of Saint Florent to the margin of the river. Soldiers, women, children, old men, were crowded together, flying in consternation from their burning vil- 18th Oct.

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lages, the smoke of which darkened the air behind them, while in front extended the broad surface of the Loire, with a few barks only to ferry over the helpless multitude. In the midst of the tumult, and while the air resounded with the cries of the fugitives, every one sought his children, his parents, or his defenders; and, crowding to the shore, stretched out their arms to the opposite bank, as if, when it was reached, a period would be put to all their sufferings. So terrible was the spectacle, so vehement the agitation of the multitude, that numbers compared it to the awful spectacle which awaits the world at the day of judgment.[1]

[1] Laroch. 239, 240. Beauch. ii. 99, 100.

The generals were at first in despair at the sight of the crowd of fugitives who surrounded the army, and the utter confusion into which all ranks were thrown by the panic; a feeling which was much increased by the death of Bonchamps, who alone was acquainted with the opposite shore, and had always supported the passage of the river. But finding it in vain to stem the torrent, they made the best disposition of which the circumstances would admit, to effect the passage of the army; and with such skill were the arrangements made, that although there were only twenty-five frail barks to transport so great a multitude, the whole were ferried over, with all their baggage, without any loss, and before the advanced posts of the Republicans had yet reached Saint Florent.[2] On the day following, Westerman and the foremost of the Republicans came up to Saint Florent in time to witness the last detachments of the Vendéans cross to the opposite shore, and vented their disappointment by devastating with fire and sword the unhappy country which they had abandoned.

[2] Jom. iv. 319. Laroch. 239—241. Beauch. ii. 102—104.

The Royalists enter Brittany.

No sooner were the Vendéans in Brittany, than they made choice of Henri de Larochejaquelein to be their

commander, in the room of D'Elbée, who was utterly disabled by wounds, and on the recommendation of M. Lescure, who was yet lingering on the bed of death. "Could a miracle restore me to life," said that generous warrior with a feeble voice, when on his death-bed, "I could form no wish but to be his aid-de-camp." Much had been gained by effecting the passage; but though the troops were still numerous, they were far from being in a condition to undertake active operations. Disheartened by defeat, exiled from their country, overwhelmed with a useless multitude of women and children, who followed their steps, the soldiers were very different from the ardent and impetuous bands, who at Saumur and Torfou had carried terror into the Republican ranks. They were no longer in their own parishes; their mode of fighting was ill adapted for an open country, where artillery and cavalry constituted the principal weapons of war; they had no magazines or ammunition, and they had to repair the consequences of a recent and bloody defeat. What then must have been the skill of the generals, what the valour of the soldiers, who could still, even amidst such disastrous circumstances, again chain victory to their standards, and gain such an ascendency over their enemies, that but for the invincible repugnance of the troops to leave the vicinity of their homes, they might have marched to Paris itself![1]

[1] Jom. iv. 32 Beauch. ii. 108, 109.

Opinions were divided as to the course which the army should now pursue. M. de Lescure strongly recommended that they should advance, before they were weakened by any farther losses, to Nantes, in order both to secure a depôt for the army, open a communication with England, and place the unarmed crowd of women and children in a place of safety;[2] and it would have been well for the Royalist cause if his ad-

[2] Jom. iv. 321. Laroch. 249. Beauch. ii. 110, 111.

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vice had been adopted. But the Prince of Talmont strongly urged an advance towards Rennes, where an insurrection was expected to break out, and his advice was adopted.

23d Oct.

The army advanced successively to Ingrande, and Chateau Gonthier, the garrisons of which were easily routed. At Laval, nine thousand National Guards disputed the entrance of the town, but Larochejaquelein carried it by assault, and dispersed the enemy.[1] Meanwhile, General Lechelle, and the Convention, who flattered themselves that the insurrection was crushed by the victory of Cholet, were beyond measure astonished by the discovery, that the Royalists had crossed the river without loss, and were in a situation menacing alike to Angers and Nantes. After much hesitation, it was resolved to divide the army into two columns, the one of which was to cross at Nantes, and the other by the bridge of Cé, and unite for the pursuit of the Royal army. Lechelle came up with them, while still occupying the town of Laval; and dividing his army into two columns, commenced an attack. Larochejaquelein flew through the ranks, and addressed these energetic words to his soldiers:—"To efface now the remembrance of your former defeats is the only salvation that remains to you. On your arms now depends not only your own lives, and those of your wives and children, but the throne of France, and the altars of God. Let us then advance to victory; the Bretons extend their arms to receive you; they will aid us to reconquer our hearths; but now we must conquer; a defeat would be irreparable ruin." Lescure insisted upon being carried in a litter through the ranks, and sharing in the dangers that awaited them. Animated by these examples, the Royalists advanced to the encounter in close columns.

[1] Jom. iv. 321. Laroch. 257. Beauch. ii. 117.

Battle of Chateau Gonthier.

25th Oct.

By a vigorous charge at the head of a small body of horse, Stofflet made himself master of some pieces of cannon, which he immediately turned against the enemy; Larochejaquelein and Royrand pressed them severely in front, while another column, headed by Dehargues, turned their flank, and attacked them in rear. The Vendéans had to deal with the redoubtable garrison of Mayence, but they fought with the courage of despair, and on no former occasion had exhibited a more enthusiastic valour. After a desperate struggle, the Republicans began to give way; they were pursued with loud shouts by the Royalists as far as Chateau Gonthier, where a battery of cannon for a moment arrested their progress; but Larochejaquelein threw himself on the guns, carried them, and pursued the enemy through the town with great slaughter. On reaching the open country, on the opposite side, they dispersed, and, with great difficulty, and in utter confusion, by diverging lines, reached the towns of Rennes and Nantes. In this battle, the garrison of Mayence, which had inflicted such losses on the Vendéans, was almost entirely destroyed; the total loss of the Republicans was twelve thousand men, and nineteen pieces of cannon; and of their whole army, scarce seven thousand could be rallied at Angers after the action. General Lechelle was so overwhelmed by the disaster, that he resigned the command in despair, and retired to Tours, where anxiety and chagrin soon brought him to an untimely end.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 322. 326. 330. Laroch. 262—264. Kleber, Guerres des Vend. ii. 305, 306. Beauch. ii. 120. 123—130.

On the day when this astonishing victory was gained, Barrere announced the extinction of the war of La Vendée in the Convention, in the following terms:—"La Vendée is no more. Montaigut and Cholet are in our power; the brigands are everywhere exterminated; a profound solitude reigns in the Bocage, co-

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vered with cinders and watered with tears. The death of Bonchamps alone is equivalent to a victory." Abandoning themselves to the most tumultuous joy at this intelligence, the people danced in all the public places of Paris, and everywhere the exclamation was heard, "La Vendée is no more." It may be conceived, then, what was the public consternation when, a few days after, it was discovered that the Republican army was dispersed, and that nothing remained to prevent the advance of the Royalists to the capital![1]

[1] Beauch. ii. 132—134.

Desperate state of the Republicans after their Defeat.

This glorious victory restored at once the Vendéan cause: the remains of the Republican army had fled in different directions to Rennes, Angers, and Nantes, and nothing remained to prevent the Royalists from marching either to Paris, Nantes, or Alençon. General Lenoir, in his report to the Convention, declared, "The rebels may now drive us before them to Paris, if they choose." Unfortunately they were led by the hopes of succours from England to direct their march to the coast, and thus lost the moment of decisive success. After remaining ten days at Laval, to restore some degree of order in the army, they advanced to Fougueres, in the hope of being reinforced by recruits from Brittany, and of drawing nearer the expected aid from Great Britain. Here two emigrants arrived with despatches from the British Government, which, after protesting the desire of England, to aid them, and recommending Granville as the point of debarkation, promised succour, on their arrival at that port.[2] This offer removed every hesitation as to their plans; the prospect of obtaining a seaport town, defended by fortifications, where they could at once deposit in a place of safety the crowd of helpless mouths which encumbered the army, obtain a firm footing for their stores, and open a direct communi-

[2] Laroch. 281. Jom. iv. 327, 328. Beauch. ii. 138. Guerres des Vend. ii. 327.

cation with the powerful allies who seemed to be advancing to their assistance, dispelled every doubt. They determined, in consequence, to march to Granville, and despatched an answer by the British envoy, in which, after expressing their intentions, and explaining their wants, they entreated that a Prince of the Blood might be sent to assume the command, and terminate the divisions which already began to paralyze their movements.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 329. Laroch. 281. Beauch. ii. 152–155.

Meanwhile, the Republicans did every thing in their power to repair the disaster; and while Kleber laboured assiduously at Angers to reorganize his army, the Convention issued a bloody decree, in which they ordered, that "Every city which should receive the rebels, give them succour, or fail to repel them with all the means in their power, should be treated as a city in revolt, razed to the ground, and the whole property of the inhabitants confiscated to the Republic."[2] Fortunately the weakness of their arms on the right bank of the Loire prevented this decree from being generally carried into execution.

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[2] Guerres des Vend. ii. 321.

At Fougeres the army sustained an irreparable loss by the death of M. Lescure, who sunk at length under the consequences of the wound he had received at the battle of Cholet, and the protracted suffering and anxiety which he had since undergone. He awaited the approach of death with his usual serenity. "Open the windows," said he to his wife, who was watching by his bed-side; is it clear?"—"Yes," said she, "the sun is shining."—"I have then," replied the dying general, "a veil before my eyes: I always thought that my wound was mortal: I have no longer any doubt of it. My dearest, I am about to leave you; that is my sole regret, and that I have not been able to replace the King upon the throne. I leave you in the

Death of M. de Lescure.

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midst of a civil war, with a helpless infant, and another in your bosom; that is what distresses me. For myself I have no fears; I have often seen death before me, and it has no terrors: I hope to go to Heaven. It is you alone that I regret," and here his eyes filled with tears; "I hoped to have made you happy. Forgive me now, if ever I have caused you distress; and console yourself with thinking that I shall be in Heaven; I carry with me the blessed presentiment that the Almighty will watch over your days." He soon after breathed his last, while a smile of benevolence still lingered on his features; and the pious care of his relations committed him to the earth, in an unknown place of sepulture, where his body was preserved from the insults which the fury of the Republicans would have inflicted on his remains.[1]

[1] Laroch. 269-271. Beauch. ii. 149.

The Vendéans having at length recovered from their fatigues, advanced slowly to Granville, which they surrounded with thirty thousand combatants. Their march had been so much delayed by their incumbrances, that no hope remained of surprising the place, and the want of heavy artillery precluded the possibility of breaching its ramparts. It was therefore resolved to attempt an escalade, for the English succours had not arrived, and the circumstances of the army rendered immediate success indispensable. After scaling ladders were prepared, and the Royalists, after having in vain summoned the place, advanced to the assault, such was the ardour of the soldiers that they not only made themselves masters of the suburbs, but rushed into the outworks, and some of the bravest even mounted the rampart, supplying the want of scaling ladders by their bayonets, which they stuck into the crevices of the walls. The garrison, panic-struck, were flying from the top, when a deserter ex-

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The Royalists repulsed at Granville.

claimed, "Treason, we are betrayed," and the impetuous crowd, yielding to the impulse, precipitated themselves back into the ditch. The attack continued, but, not having been preceded by any reconnoissance, and carried on in utter ignorance of the works, it took place on the least accessible front, and where the assailants were exposed to a severe flanking fire from the armed vessels in the harbour. Notwithstanding the most heroic exertions, the Vendéans were repulsed; and the Republican commander, seeing no other way of driving them out of the suburbs, set fire to them himself, and the conflagration being aided by a high wind, soon reduced them to ashes. The Vendéans, at the earnest entreaty of their leaders, returned a second time to the assault over the smoking ruins of the suburb; but this attack was again unsuccessful. Their priests animated their courage, by marching at their head with the crucifix in their hands; the officers led on the columns, and over the smoking ruins of the houses the ardent troops rushed forward, regardless of the storm of musketry and grape which showered down upon them from the rampart, and a severe flanking fire from the gun-boats in the harbour. The palisades were broken down, the ditch crossed, and in some places even the rampart scaled; but the resistance of the Republicans was as brave as the assault; and after a murderous conflict of six-and-thirty hours, Henri de Larochejaquelein was reluctantly compelled to order a retreat, after sustaining a loss of eighteen hundred men.[1]

[1] Laroch. 286–288. Jom. iv. 332. Beauch. ii. 168–170.

This check proved extremely hurtful to the Vendéan cause. Lrochejaquelein and Stofflet determined to advance to Caen, where a strong Royalist party was known to exist; and they had already set out at the head of the cavalry for that purpose, when a revolt

Their Retreat towards the Loire.

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broke out among the troops. The authority of the chiefs was immediately disregarded; the Prince of Talmont, accused of a design to escape to Jersey, was seized by the mutineers, and with difficulty rescued from instant death. Larochejaquelein's voice was contemned; Stofflet alone preserved any authority over the troops. The peasants, who had never been subjected to regular discipline, and could not be made to comprehend the plan of operations which their leaders had adopted, loudly exclaimed against any farther continuance of their wearisome march, and insisted upon immediately returning to their homes. The generals, after exhausting every effort of reason and eloquence, were compelled to yield to the torrent, and orders were given to the whole army to move towards the Loire, to the infinite joy of the soldiers, who declared that they would secure a passage at Angers, though its walls were made of iron.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 332, 333. Laroch. 289. Beauch. ii. 173—175.

They Defeat the Republicans at Pontorson. Nov. 19.

The army, on its return homewards, took the road of Pontorson. Rossignol, having collected a body of eighteen thousand men, endeavoured to defend that town, and a furious conflict took place in the streets; but the attack of the Royalists, who felt that they must force their way sword in hand to La Vendée, was irresistible; the Republicans were driven at the point of the bayonet through the streets, their cannoneers cut down at their guns, and the whole army defeated, with the loss of all their baggage and artillery. Rossignol fell back to Dol, where, having received considerable reinforcements, and been joined by another Republican army, which raised his force to thirty-five thousand men, he endeavoured to make head against the enemy, and bar their return to La Vendée. On the approach of the Royalists, however, he evacuated the town, and its single and spacious

And at Dol.

street was crowded by carriages, artillery, and baggage-waggons, and above sixty thousand persons who encumbered the army. At midnight, the action commenced by a vigorous attack of the Republicans on the advanced guard of the Royalists, drawn up in front of the town; the alarm was immediately given, and the troops hastily sprung to their arms, amidst the prayers and tears of their wives and children, who saw no possible escape but in their valour. The rattling of the artillery, the cries of the soldiers, the gleaming of the sabres in torchlight as the horsemen shook them in the air when advancing to the charge, the fleeting illumination of the shells which burst on all sides, filled the helpless multitude with terror and agitation. The first attack of the Royalists was entirely successful, the Republicans were driven back two leagues, but their left wing and reserve having been suddenly assailed, when disordered by success, by Rossignol's right, were thrown into confusion, and driven back with great loss to the town.[1]

Their desperate situation.

[1] Laroch. 292. Beauch. ii. 184.

The confusion there soon became indescribable; the fugitives broke their way through the unarmed crowd, while the horsemen trampled under foot men, women, and children in their flight; and the street was covered with wounded and dying victims, imploring their countrymen not to desert them in their distress. In this extremity the chiefs were in such despair that they sought death; Henri de Larochejaquelein remained several minutes with his arms across in front of a battery, while Autichamp, Marigny, and the other leaders, exerted themselves to the utmost to stop the fugitives, and Stofflet, who had at first been carried away by the torrent, made the most vigorous efforts to check it. The women even snatched their fusils from the soldiers, and discharged them at the enemy;

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and the priests, with the cross in their hands, exhorted them to return to the combat. The curate, in particular, of Santa Maria de Re, from an eminence harangued the men in the most energetic strains. "My children," said he, "I will march at your head with the crucifix in my hands; let those who will follow me fall on their knees, and I will give them absolution; if they fall, they will be received into Paradise, but the cowards who betray God and their families will be massacred by the Blues, and their souls consigned to hell." Above two thousand men fell on their knees, received absolution, and returned to the battle with the curate at their head, exclaiming "Vive le Roi! Nous allons en Paradis." Stimulated in this manner, the soldiers renewed the combat; soon such was the fury of the contending parties, that they seized each other, and tore their bodies with their hands when their ammunition was exhausted; so completely were the ranks intermingled, that frequently the Vendéans and Republicans were served with ammunition from the same tumbrils. At length the valour of the Royalists prevailed; the battalions of volunteers in the Republican army began to fall into confusion, and soon the rout became general; the whole army disbanded and fled, some to Rennes and others to Fougeres, leaving six thousand killed and wounded on the field of battle;[1] while the Royalists headed by their priests, returned to Dol, and hastened to the churches to return thanks to Heaven for their unhoped-for escape from so desperate a situation.

[1] Laroch. 300—305. Jom. iv. 336, 337. Beauch. ii. 197, 198.

The Republicans were repulsed, but not defeated. They retired to a position which they had strongly fortified around the town of Antrain, and there still barred the line of the Royalists' march. At noon they were attacked at all points by the Vendéans, headed

by Larochejaquelein, who was fearful to allow the first moments of enthusiasm, consequent on their victory, to pass away without achieving decisive success. For long the obstinacy of the Republicans arrested the furious onset of the Vendéans, but at length their intrenchments were carried, and they fled on all sides. The victors entered Antrain pell-mell with the fugitives, and a scene of matchless horror ensued in the crowded streets of that town. In the confusion of the flight, the soldiers, the camp followers, and the wounded, were crowded amidst the artillery and baggage-waggons; the whole fell together into the hands of the Royalists, and there was great danger that an indiscriminate massacre would ensue from the troops, now wrought up by the cruelties of the Republicans to the highest pitch of exasperation. But their leaders interposed, and signalized their triumph by an extraordinary act of humanity. The wounded who fell into their hands, were not only treated and clothed with the same care as their own soldiers, but they were all sent back, without exchange, to Rennes, with a letter to the Republican authorities there, in which, after recounting the atrocious cruelty of their troops in La Vendée, they added, "but it is by acts of humanity that the Royal army avenge the massacre of its enemies."[1]

[1] Beauch. ii. 200—203.

Their great difficulties notwithstanding these Victories.

These great victories again restored the Royalist affairs; for, during the first confusion following their defeat, the Republicans were in no condition to have prevented them, either from reaching the bridge of Cé or Saumur, or even making themselves masters of Nantes or Granville, from which the garrison had now been withdrawn.[2] After long deliberation, the generals determined to march back to that place, which now would become an easy prey, and where they might

[2] Jom. iv. 338.

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both disencumber themselves of their followers, and open a communication with England. But no sooner was this determination known, than the troops again broke out into open revolt; and so vehement was the tumult, that it could only be appeased by an immediate change of the destination of the army to Angers. "Consider," said they, "how formidable the Republic is: have we not invariably found that a bloody combat is but the prelude to another still more bloody; are not we weakened by immense losses, and totally inadequate to head an insurrection in Brittany? What can we do, on an inhospitable soil, without succour, without support, often without food? Let us return to the land which gave us birth; we shall at least find some vestiges of our altars, and some remains of our homes, where we may find shelter, or in the last extremity be allowed to repose in unmolested graves. Our corpses will not there, as here, become the prey of vultures and beasts of prey. What do we expect from the Bretons? Do they not treat us like wandering brigands? Let us, therefore, hasten to regain La Vendée; Charette is still redoubtable amidst its woods; let us rally our standards to his, and he may yet lead us to victory." These discourses inflamed the minds of the people to such a degree, that all efforts to sway them became fruitless. In vain the colours were displayed on the road to Pontorson, and the chiefs made every effort to induce the soldiers to follow them; a mutiny more terrible than that at Granville arose on all sides, and the leaders were reluctantly obliged to take the road to the Loire. Thither, accordingly, they marched by Fougeres, Ernee, and Laval, without being disquieted by the enemy; but the courage of the soldiers was much abated by the spectacles of horror which met them in revisiting those towns which they had

formerly occupied. Everywhere the sick, the wounded, the children who had been left behind, had been massacred by the Republicans, and their bodies still lay unburied in the streets; even the owners of the houses who had given them shelter, had been put to the sword with merciless severity. Every one approached Angers with the conviction, that sooner or later, in the progress of this terrible war, he would perish in the field, or on the scaffold.[1]

[1] Laroch. 309. Jom. iv. 338. Beauch. ii. 207, 208.

They are repulsed at Angers.

Angers, surrounded by an old wall, and encumbered by vast fauxbourgs, was defended only by a small garrison, and, on the approach of the Royalists, General Danican had thrown himself into it with his brigade, less in the hope of making good the place, than of securing for it terms of capitulation; and if the troops had known how to conduct a *coup-de-main*, it would have fallen an easy prey, and the whole measures of the Convention would have been defeated. But the attack was not conducted with more skill than that of Granville, and the troops, worn out by fatigue and suffering, did not display their wonted bravery; for long they confined themselves to a distant cannonade; but, at length, after thirty hours of a murderous conflict, they had reached the rampart, and were commencing the escalade, when their rear was assailed by the Republican cavalry, who had been detached by Rossignol to harass the besiegers. The attack was quickly repulsed by M. Forestier with the Vendéan horse; nevertheless, such was the confusion produced by this unforeseen alarm, that a sudden panic instantly seized the army; they left the walls, and began to file off in confusion, without orders, towards Beaugé. The chiefs did their utmost to bring them back to the assault, but in vain; they even went so far as to promise them the pillage of the town if they were suc-

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cessful; but such was the virtue of these simple people, even amidst all their sufferings, that they rejected the proposal with horror, and declared that God would abandon them, if such a project was again entertained.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 340. Laroch. 310. Beauch. ii. 214—216.

No sooner had the army reached Beaugè, than they perceived the ruinous consequences of the step they had taken. There were no means of passing the Loire in that line but by Saumur or Tours; the bridges of which, defended by numerous garrisons, afforded no prospect of effecting the object. A universal consternation seized the troops; though in sight of their homes, they were utterly unable to cross the river. The sick multiplied with frightful rapidity; the cries of the wounded, who were abandoned on the march, harrowed up every heart; the severity of the weather, the dreadful roads, the famine which began to prevail, the weeping crowd who surrounded the soldiers, unnerved the strongest hearts. The chiefs knew not what to do; the men were in despair.[2]

[2] Jom. iv. 340. Laroch. 313, 314.

In this extremity, the firmness of M. de Larochejaquelein did not desert him, and after carefully weighing every consideration, it was resolved to alter the destination of the army, and move by La Flèche upon Mans. The retreat was protected by a strong rear-guard, but no danger was apprehended in front. Great, then, was the consternation of the troops when on arriving at La Flèche, they found the bridge broken down, and five thousand men occupying the opposite bank of the river, while their rear was vehemently assailed. But the presence of mind of the general saved them from apparent ruin. Ordering the rear-guard to keep firm, he took three hundred of his boldest horsemen, and put a grenadier behind each *en croupe;* with this he crossed the stream at a ford

9th Dec.

a short distance farther up, at nightfall, and attacked the Republicans in the dark. A panic instantly seized their troops, who dispersed, and fled in all directions, while Larochejaquelein re-established the bridge, and gave a day's repose to his wearied army, after which they continued their march without opposition to Mans.[2]

[1] Laroch. 317. Jom. iv. 342. Beauch. ii. 223—225.

This town was destined to witness the ruin of the Royalist cause. The troops arrived there in such a state of fatigue, depression, and suffering, that it was easy to foresee that they would be unable to withstand a vigorous attack; six months of incessant marches and combats had weakened their resolution, as well as exhausted their strength. They were in the state of the Grand Army on their retreat from Moscow, with this additional circumstance of aggravation, that an exhausted multitude, equal in number to the soldiers, encumbered the army, and melted every heart by the spectacle of their sufferings. The numbers of sick and wounded rendered a halt of a few days absolutely necessary; and this gave time to the Republican generals to concert measures for their destruction. Forces were accumulating on all sides; Marceau, Westerman, and Kleber, had assembled forty thousand men, with which they assailed the exhausted Royalist army, who were in no condition to resist an attack. They made, nevertheless, an heroic defence, though only twelve thousand could be collected in a condition fit to face the enemy. Larochejaquelein posted the bravest of his troops in a fir wood, from whence they kept up so heavy a fire as long held in check the left of the Republicans; but Kleber having driven back the division of Stofflet from its position, the whole army was borne backwards like a torrent into the town. There, however, they resisted in the most obstinate manner. Larochejaquelein

Defeated with great loss at Mans. 10th Dec.

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pointed his cannon down all the streets leading to the great square, and filled the whole houses in the streets with musketeers; a terrible fire arose on all sides, and increased the horrors of a nocturnal combat. But after a frightful night of carnage, the Republican columns had gained ground in every quarter; Larochejaquelein had two horses killed under him; and, in spite of his utmost efforts, the mighty crowd was forced out of the town, and disbanded when they reached the plain on the other side. The scene of confusion and horror which there ensued, defies all description; Larochejaquelein, in vain assembled fifteen hundred men to check the advance of the victorious columns; he was wounded, and overturned in the tumult, his band dispersed, and the Republicans commenced an indiscriminate carnage on the shrieking fugitives. Ten thousand soldiers, and an equal number of women and children, perished under their relentless swords; while almost all their artillery, and an incalculable quantity of baggage, fell into the hands of the victors. Such as survived, owed their escape chiefly to the heroism of the Chevalier Duhoux, and Viscount Scepeaux, who, with eight hundred brave men, maintained their ground to the very last, and, with their own hands, discharged the guns of a battery which covered the rear-guard, after all the cannoneers had fallen by their side. The pitiless Republicans massacred the women and children by thousands; youth, grace, rank, and beauty, were alike disregarded; and the vast crowd which had flocked together to avoid destruction, perished under the incessant discharges of grape-shot, or the platoons of the musketry, under the eyes of the Commissioners of the Convention.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 343, 344. Laroch. 320—322. Lac. xi. 167, 168. Beauch. ii. 230—238. 16th Dec.

Such of the Royalists as had escaped the carnage,

reassembled at Laval two days afterwards, and it was resolved to move to Ancenis, with the design of again attempting the passage of the Loire. A single boat alone was found in that town, but four large vessels, laden with hay, were on the opposite side, which was guarded by patrols of the enemy. Henri de Larochejaquelein finding that no one had courage to attempt their seizure, himself leapt into the boat, while another, which had been brought in a cart, bore M. de Langerie and eighteen soldiers. The river, swollen with winter rains, was flowing in an impetuous torrent, and all eyes were fixed with agonizing anxiety on the frail barks on which the safety of the whole depended. At length they reached the opposite shore, and the peasants began with ardour to work at unloading the vessels of their cargoes, when a detachment of Republicans appeared on the coast, where they had landed, and attacked and dispersed the soldiers of Larochejaquelein, who was compelled to seek refuge in a neighbouring forest. At the same time, a gun-boat of the enemy appeared in the river, and, by a few discharges, sunk all the rafts which, with eager haste, the peasants had been forming to transport themselves over, while the advanced guard of Westerman assailed the rear. Thus, at the very moment when his skill was most required, the army found itself deprived of its leader.[1]

Their hopeless state. Heroic conduct of Henri de Larochejaquelein.

[1] Laroch. 332, 333. Jom. iv. 345, 346. Beauch. ii. 243—245.

Despair now seized upon the army, which fled in confusion, without either provisions or leaders, to Niort, and from thence, through a heavy fall of snow, to Savenay. The troops melted away on all sides; the sick and wounded were abandoned, the most intrepid straggled in detached parties to the banks of the Loire, and above one thousand were ferried over in the night, and formed the nucleus from whence

Final rout at Savenay.

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1793. those intrepid bands of Chouans were formed, who so long desolated the Morbihan; while some, with less resolution, surrendered themselves to the Republicans, in hopes of that amnesty which they held out as a treacherous snare to their prostrated enemies. Hardly ten thousand, of whom only six thousand were armed, could be assembled at Savenay, where, nevertheless, they made a gallant defence. Their leaders, M. de Marigny, Fleuriot, the Prince de Talmont, and other indomitable chiefs, urged the men to combat with the courage of despair; all the wounded who could sit on horseback were led out to the fight, and even young women and boys seized the muskets of

Dec. 23 their fathers and brothers and joined the array. Long, and with heroic resolution, they held the immense columns of the Republicans in check; and when at length they were obliged to retire, they fell back in good order, with the women in front, and the few pieces of artillery they had left facing about in the rear till the last cartridge and cannon-shot in the army was expended. Even after they could no longer discharge their pieces, the rear-guard continued to fight with unshaken bravery with their swords and bayonets till they all fell under the fire of the Republicans. "I examined their bodies," said the Republican general in his despatch to Merlin de Thionville, "and recognized the stern expression, the invincible resolution of Cholet and Laval. The men who could conquer such enemies, have nothing to fear from other nations. That war, so often styled in ridicule a contest with brigands and peasants, has been the severest trial of the Republic: I now feel that we shall have children's play with our other enemies."[1]

[1] Laroch. 345—349, Jom, iv, 348, 349. Lac. xi. 168, 169, Bauch. ii. 250—259.

This defeat was a mortal stroke to the Vendéan cause; of eighty thousand souls who had crossed the

Loire six weeks before, scarce three thousand got back in detached bodies to La Vendée. Concealed by the courageous hospitality of the peasants, numbers were saved from the savage cruelty of their pursuers, among whom were Mesdames de Larochejaquelein and Bonchamps, who escaped unparalleled dangers, and lived to fascinate the world by the splendid story of their husbands' virtues, and their own misfortunes. Others, less fortunate, fell into the hands of the Republicans, who hunted them down night and day during the dreadful winter of 1794, and led to prison and the scaffold the noblest blood in France.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 349. Laroch. 350—361.

In war every thing depends upon rapidity of execution and an accurate attention to time; the moment of success, once allowed to escape, never returns. Hardly had the Royalist standards disappeared from the shores of Brittany, when the tardy English succours, commanded by Lord Moira, who had exerted himself to the utmost to accelerate the preparations, appeared on the coast of Cherbourg, having on board eight English battalions, four thousand Hanoverians, and two thousand emigrants, in all ten thousand men. They looked out in vain for the expected signals, and after remaining on the coast for some days, and receiving intelligence of the defeat of the Royalists at Granville, returned to Guernsey, where the expedition was broken up. Had the succour arrived on the coast a fortnight sooner, had even a few English frigates appeared off Granville during the assault, to intimidate the Republicans, and encourage the Royalists, the town would have been taken, the junction of the English troops with the Royalists effected, and the united forces marched in triumph to Paris.[2]

Tardy movements of the English to support the Insurgents.

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[2] Jom. iv. 351. Beauch. ii. 178—181.

The expedition beyond the Loire was doubtless ruinous to the cause of La Vendée; and yet never did an

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army so situated achieve such triumphs as it did before its fatal termination. Before it fell, that army, without magazines or provisions, at the distance of forty leagues from its home, and surrounded by three hostile armies, marched one hundred and seventy leagues in sixty days, took twelve cities, gained seven battles, killed twenty thousand of the Republicans, and took from them one hundred pieces of cannon, trophies greater than were gained by the vast Allied Armies in Flanders during the whole campaign.[1]

[1] Beauch. ii. 260.

Operations of Charette.

While the great bulk of the Vendéan forces were engaged in this perilous and fatal expedition, Charette, with a few thousand men who adhered to his standard, made himself master of the Isle of Noirmoutiers, where the Republicans had left but a slender garrison. He immediately began fortifying it with care, with the design of making a depot for his sick, wounded, and stores.[2] From this place of security he made various expeditions into the adjoining province during the winter of 1793-4, with various success, until the return of the wreck of the Grand Army from its expedition beyond the Loire. Frequently the Republican general wrote to the Mayor of a village, that if the inhabitants would remain they should suffer no violence, and having prevailed on them by this deceitful pledge not to fly, surrounded it with his soldiers, and put every living soul to death.[3] General Thurreau was appointed commander-in-chief of the Army of the West, and he found himself nominally at the head of fifty thousand men, but one-half of whom alone were fit for active service, the remainder being sick, wounded, or exhausted in the hospitals. Thurreau commenced his operations by a descent on the Island of Noirmoutiers, of which he easily made himself master, in the absence of Charette. He there found

[2] Beauch. v. 258. Ibid. ii. 293—297.

[3] Laroch. 144.

D'Elbée covered with wounds, who had been removed to that place of security after the battle of Cholet. When the soldiers entered his room, where he was unable to rise from his bed, they exclaimed,—"Here then is D'Elbée at last."—"Yes," he replied, "here is your greatest enemy; if I had been able to wield a sword you should never have taken Noirmoutiers." He underwent a long interrogatory, which he answered with equal firmness and good faith; and met death with unshaken constancy sitting in his chair, from which his wounds disabled him from rising. His last words were raised to save an innocent man who was led out for execution by his side. The officer who presided at the execution, named, after D'Elbée and two others who were placed together, "Wieland the traitor, who sold Noirmoutiers to the rebels."—D'Elbée, instantly summoning up all his strength, exclaimed:—"No, gentlemen, Wieland is not a traitor; he never aided our party, and you are about to put to death an innocent man;" but scarcely were the generous words uttered, when the order to fire was given, and the whole four fell together. His wife was next day executed with the generous hostess who had given her shelter in her misfortunes; they both evinced in their last moments the same courage which had been displayed by the murdered general. Numbers of other Royalists were shot at the same time, among whom were the two young sons of Maignan de l'Ecorce, who had followed their father to battle with a courage beyond their years.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 265. Laroch. 402, 403. Beauch. ii. 347.

Henri de Larochejaquelein did not long survive his brave commander. After his separation from the army at the rout of Mans, he took refuge in the Forest of Visins, near the Loire, from whence he made frequent incursions upon the Republican posts with such

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1793. success, that his little party daily increased, and proved a source of unceasing disquietude to the Republicans. In one of his incursions he made prisoner an adjutant-general, bearing an order to proclaim an amnesty to the peasants, and massacre them after they submitted, a discovery which contributed in a powerful manner to perpetuate the war, by taking away all hope from the vanquished. He fell at length the victim of his humanity: approaching two Republican grenadiers, upon whom his party was preparing to

March 4, 1794. fall, he ran forward, exclaiming, "Surrender, I give you quarter." Hardly were the words uttered when the men shot him dead on the spot. He was aged only twenty-one years. When his soldiers had buried him where he fell, they exclaimed:—"Now the Convention may indeed say that La Vendée no longer exists."[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 178. Beauch. ii. 374, 375. Laroch. 406.

The Prince de Talmont about the same time fell a victim to the Republican revenge. He was made prisoner near Laval, and after being led about in triumph from city to city, for a considerable time, was executed in the court of his own chateau. When brought before his judges, he said, "Descended from the Latremouilles, the son of the Lord of Laval, I was in duty bound to serve the King; and I will show in my last moments that I was worthy to defend the throne. Sixty-eight combats with the Republicans have rendered me familiar with death."—"You are an aristocrat, and I am a patriot," said the judge.—"Execute your office," replied he, "I have performed my duty."[2] His faithful servant was offered his life, but he refused to survive his master, and followed him to the scaffold.

[2] Laroch. 398. Beauch. ii. 262, 263.

The execution of these gallant chiefs put an end to the first period of the Vendéan war. It might then

have been terminated, had the Republicans made a humane use of their victory, and sheathed the sword of conquest after it had destroyed its enemies in the field. But the darkest period of the tragedy was approaching, and in the rear of their armies came those fiends in human form, who exceeded even the horrors of Marat and Robespierre, and have left a darker stain on French history than the tyranny of Nero, or the Massacre of Bartholomew. Their atrocities took all hope from the vanquished; and in despair and revenge sprung up a new set of CHOUAN bands, who, under Charette, Stofflet, and Tinteniac, long maintained the Royalist cause in the Western Provinces, and proved more fatal to the Republicans than all the armies of Germany.

Unheard of Cruelties of the Republicans.

Thurreau was the first who commenced against the Vendéans a systematic war of extermination. He formed twelve corps, aptly denominated *infernal columns*, whose orders were to traverse the country in every direction, isolate it from all communication with the rest of the world, carry off or destroy all the grain and cattle; murder all the inhabitants; and burn down all the houses. These orders were too faithfully executed; the infernal columns pierced the country in every direction; their path might be traced by the conflagration of villages, their footsteps known by the corpses of the inhabitants. A contemporary Republican writer has left this character of their exploits:— "It seemed as if the Vendéans were no longer regarded as men; the pregnant woman, the child in the cradle, even the beasts of the field, the very stones, the houses, the soil itself, appeared to the Republicans enemies worthy of a total extermination."[1] But from this atrocious warfare arose new difficulties to the invaders. From the consequences of their ravages, pro-

Thurreau and the Infernal Columns.

[1] Toul. v. 199. Beauch. ii. 369.

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visions failed equally to them as their enemies; and the Chouan bands were swelled by multitudes who were driven to despair by the conflagration of their dwellings, and the massacre of their relations. Strengthened by such recruits, the unconquerable Charette maintained the contest, and often took a bloody revenge on his enemies. Acquainted with every road and ambuscade in the country, capable of enduring the extremities of hunger, serene in danger, cheerful in misfortune, affable with his soldiers, inexhaustible in resources, invincible in resolution, he displayed in that Guerilla warfare the talents of a consummate general. In vain Thurreau sent against him General Haxo, one of the ablest of the Republican commanders; his indefatigable opponent retired before him, till he arrived at a favourable place for the attack, and then turning to his men, and ordering them to halt: "We have retired far enough," said he, "now is the time to show the Convention that La Vendée still exists." With that they precipitated themselves with such fury upon their pursuers, that the column was broken, and put to flight, and General Haxo himself slain, while bravely endeavouring to restore the combat.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 266. 272, 273. Lac. xi. 174. 176. Beauch. ii. 369, 371, 410—418. Laroch. 414.

Executions at Nantes.

While Thurreau was pursuing with varied success the system of extermination in La Vendée, the scaffold was erected at Nantes, and those infernal executions commenced, which have affixed a stain upon the French Revolution, unequalled since the beginning of the world. A Revolutionary Tribunal was formed there under the direction of Carrier, and it soon outstripped even the rapid march of Danton and Robespierre. "Their principle," says the Republican historian, "was, that it was necessary to destroy, *en masse*, all the prisoners. At their command was formed a corps called the Legion of Marat, composed of

the most determined and bloodthirsty of the Revolutionists, the members of which were entitled, of their own authority, to incarcerate any person whom they chose. The number of their prisoners was soon between three and four thousand, and they divided among themselves all their property. Whenever a fresh supply of captives was wanted, the alarm was spread of a counter revolution, the *générale* beat, the cannon planted; and this was immediately followed by innumerable arrests. Nor were they long in disposing of the captives. The miserable wretches were either slain with poniards in the prisons, or carried out in a vessel, and drowned by wholesale in the Loire. On one occasion, a hundred 'fanatical priests,' as they were termed, were taken out together, stripped of their clothes, and precipitated into the waves. The same vessel served for many of these Noyades; and the horror expressed by many of the citizens for that mode of execution formed the ground for fresh arrests, and increased murders. Women, big with child; infants, eight, nine, and ten years of age, were thrown together into the stream, on the sides of which, men, armed with sabres, were placed, to cut off their hands, if the waves should throw them undrowned on the shore. The citizens, with loud shrieks, implored the lives of the little innocents, and numbers offered to adopt them as their own; but, though a few were granted to their urgent entreaty, the greater part were doomed to destruction. Thus were consigned to the grave whole generations at once; the ornament of the present, the hope of the future." [1]

Legion of Marat.

[1] Toul. v. 103, 104. Beauch. ii. 279—281. Th. vi. 374.

On one occasion, by orders of Carrier, twenty-three of the Royalists; on another, twenty-four, were guillotined together, without any trial. The executioner remonstrated, but in vain. Among them were many

Carrier's Republican Baptisms and Marriages.

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children of seven or eight years of age, and seven women; the executioner died two or three days after with horror at what he himself had done. At another time, one hundred and forty women, incarcerated as suspected, were drowned together, though actively engaged in making bandages and shirts for the Republican soldiers. So great was the multitude of captives who were brought in on all sides, that the executioners, as well as the company of Marat, declared themselves exhausted with fatigue; and a new method of disposing of them was adopted, borrowed from Nero, but improved on the plan of that tyrant. A hundred, or a hundred and fifty victims, for the most part women and children, were crowded together in a boat, with a concealed trap-door in the bottom, which was conducted into the middle of the Loire; at a signal given, the crew leapt into another boat, the bolts were withdrawn, and the shrieking victims precipitated into the waves, amidst the laughter of the company of Marat, who stood on the banks, to cut down any who approached the shore. This was what Carrier called his *Republican Baptisms.* The *Republican Marriages* were, if possible, a still greater refinement on cruelty. Two persons of different sexes, generally an old man and an old woman, or a young man and a young woman, bereft of every species of dress, were bound together, and after being left in torture in that situation for half an hour, thrown into the river. It was ascertained, by authentic documents, that six hundred children had perished by that inhuman species of death; and such was the quantity of corpses accumulated in the Loire, that the water of that river was infected so as to render a public ordinance necessary, forbidding the use of it to the inhabitants;[1] and the mariners, when they heaved their

[1] Beauch. ii. 281, 283. Th. vi. 373. Lac. xii. 164, 165. Toul. v. 104, 105—120.

anchors, frequently brought up boats charged with corpses. Birds of prey flocked to the shores, and fed on human flesh; while the very fish became so poisonous, as to induce an order of the Municipality of Nantes, prohibiting them to be taken by the fishermen.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 374.

The scenes in the prisons which preceded these horrid executions exceeded all that romance had figured of the terrible. Many women died of terror the moment a man entered their cells, conceiving that they were about to be led out to the Noyades; the floors were covered with the bodies of their infants, numbers of whom were yet quivering in the agonies of death. On one occasion, the inspector entered the prison to seek for a child, where the evening before he had left above three hundred infants; they were all gone in the morning, having been drowned the preceding night. To all the representations of the citizens in favour of these innocent victims, Carrier answered, "They are all vipers; let them be stifled." Three hundred young women of Nantes were drowned by him in one night; so far from having had any share in political discussions, they were of the unfortunate class who live by the pleasures of others. Several hundred persons were thrown every night, for some months, into the river; their shrieks at being led out of the entrepôt on board the barks, wakened all the inhabitants of the town, and froze every heart with horror. Fifteen thousand persons perished there under the hands of the executioner, or of diseases in prison, in one month; the total victims of the Reign of Terror at that place exceeded thirty thousand.[2]

Dreadful Scenes in the Prisons.

[2] Toul. v. 119, 120. Laroch. 394. Beauch. ii. 284, 285. Th. vi. 374. Prudhomme Vict. de la Revolution. Chateaubriand, Etud Hist. i. Pref. 45.

The peasants, both men and women, of La Vendée, met death in general with the most heroic courage; they perished boldly avowing their opinions, and exclaiming, "Vive le Roi! Nous allons en Paradis."

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Innumerable instances of heroism occurred, especially among the female sufferers. Madame de Jourdain was led out to be drowned, with her three daughters; a soldier wished to save the youngest, who was very beautiful; she threw herself into the water to share the fate of her mother, but falling on a heap of dead, could not sink. "Push me in," she exclaimed, "the water is not deep enough," and sunk beneath his thrust. Mademoiselle Cuissan, aged sixteen, of still greater beauty, excited the most vehement admiration in a young officer of Hussars, who spent three hours at her feet, entreating her to allow him to save her; but as he could not undertake to free an aged parent, the partner of her captivity, she refused life, and threw herself into the Loire along with her mother.[1]

[1] Laroch. 392, 393.

Adventures of Agatha Larochejaquelein.

Agatha Larochejaquelein escaped in the most extraordinary manner. She had left an asylum, in a cottage at Brittany, in consequence of one of the deceitful amnesties which the Republicans published to lure their victims from their places of concealment, and was seized and brought before Lamberty, one of the ferocious satellites of Carrier. Her beauty excited his admiration. "Are you afraid, brigand?" said he, "No, General," replied the worthy inheretrix of her name. "When you feel fear," said he, "send for Lamberty." When brought to the entrepôt, seeing death approaching, she recollected his words, and sent for the General. He took her out alone at night into a little boat on the Loire, with a concealed trap, which Carrier had given him for his private murders, and wished to sacrifice her to his desires; she resisted, upon which he threatened to drown her, but she, anticipating him, flew to the side to throw herself into the river. The Republican was softened; "You are a brave girl," said he, "I will save you." In effect,

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he left her concealed at the bottom of the boat, among some bushes on the margin of the stream, where she lay for eight days and nights a witness to the unceasing nocturnal massacre of her fellow-prisoners. At length she was taken from her place of concealment, and secreted with a man of the name of Sullivan, who resolved to save her, from horror at a murder which he had committed on his own brother, whom he had denounced as a Vendéan to the Republican authorities. The intelligence, however, of his humanity got wind, and Lamberty was accused some time afterwards of having saved some women from the Noyades. To prevent the evidence of this in Agatha's case, she was seized by a friend of Lamberty of the name of Robin, who carried her into a boat, where he was proceeding to poniard her, in order to extinguish any trace of his having facilitated her escape, when her beauty again subdued the ruthless murderer. She threw herself at his feet, and prevailed on him to save her life. She was again arrested, however, in the place where he had concealed her, and would certainly have been guillotined, had not the fall of Robespierre suspended the executions, and ultimately restored her to liberty.[1]

[1] Laroch. 394—396.

And Madame de Bonchamps.

The fate of Madame de Bonchamps was not less remarkable. After the rout at Mans, she lived, like all the other wives of the officers and generals, on the charity of the peasants in Brittany, whose courage and devotion no misfortunes could diminish. They at once told their names and connexions; the faithful people received them with tears of joy, and not only concealed them in their dwellings, but stinted themselves in their meals to furnish them with provisions. For several days, when the pursuit was hottest, she was concealed, with her infant child, in the thick fo-

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liage of an oak-tree, at the foot of which the Republican soldiers were frequently passing; a cough or a cry from the infant would have betrayed them both, but the little creature, though suffering under a painful malady, never uttered a groan; and both mother and child frequently slept in peace for hours, when the bayonets of their pursuers were visible through the openings of the leaves. At night, when the enemy were asleep, the little children of the cottagers brought them provisions; and occasionally some old soldiers of her husband's army hazarded their lives to render them assistance. She was at length arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Nantes; the recollection of the five thousand captives, whose lives the dying hero had saved, could not save his widow from an unanimous condemnation. The atrocious cruelty of this proceeding, however, excited so much commiseration among the numerous survivors who had been saved by his clemency, that the vehemence of their remonstrances obtained a respite from the judges; during which, the peasants who had protected her little girl sent her to the prison, and the mother had the delight of hearing her infant pray every night and morning at her bedside for her health and deliverance. At length, after a long captivity, she obtained her liberation; her daughter was intrusted with presenting the petition to the court; and even the judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal could not withstand the touching appeal made to them by the little child in behalf of its captive parent.[1]*

[1] Bonch. 72, 87.

* A singular incident attended the presenting of this petition. The little girl, who was only six years old, went up to the judges, and presented the paper, saying, "Citizens, I am come to ask the pardon of mamma." Casting their eyes on the paper, they beheld the name of Bonchamps, and one of them addressing her, said he would give her

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"The poor people," says Larochejaquelein, "in Nantes, were exceedingly kind, and did their utmost to save the victims of the Revolution; all the rich merchants also were humane, for though they had at first supported the Revolution, yet they were soon shocked with its crimes, and, in consequence, were persecuted as well as the Royalists; one hundred and nine of them were sent up to Paris for trial, and only saved by the fall of Robespierre. The ferocious class who lent their aid to the massacres and the Noyades, was composed of the little shopkeepers and more opulent of the artisans, many of whom came from other towns besides Nantes;"[1] words of vast political importance, as designating the class in whom revolutionary fervour is ever most violent, and by whom its principal atrocities are committed.

Cruelty of the small Shopkeepers in the Towns.

[1] Laroch. 391, 392.

But if humanity has cause to blush for the atrocious cruelty of the tradesmen in the towns of Brittany, it may dwell with unalloyed delight on the generous hospitality of the peasants in the country. The experience they had acquired in concealing the priests, and the young men required for the conscription, rendered them exceedingly expert at eluding the search of their enemies. Numbers were shot for giving an asylum to the Vendeans; but nothing could check their courageous humanity. Alike men, women, and

Heroic benevolence of the country Peasants.

the pardon if she would sing one of her best songs, as he knew she had a voice which charmed all the inmates of the prison. Upon this, she sung with a loud voice the words she had heard from sixty thousand men on the field of battle:—

"Vive, vive le Roi,
A bas la Republique!"

Had she been a little older, these words would have condemned both herself and her mother; but the simplicity with which they were uttered disarmed their wrath; they smiled, and after some observations on the detestable education which these fanatical Royalists gave to their children, dismissed her with the pardon she desired.

[4] Bonch. 87.

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children, displayed unbounded goodness and inexhaustible resources. A poor girl, deaf and dumb, had been made to comprehend the dangers of the Royalists, and incessantly warned them by signs when their enemies were approaching. Neither menaces of death, nor offers of gold, could shake the fidelity of the youngest children. The dogs even had contracted an aversion to the Republicans, who always used them harshly; they barked invariably at their approach, and were thus the means of saving great numbers. On the other hand, they never uttered a sound when the Royalist fugitives were to be seen, taught by the peasants to do nothing that could betray them. There was not a cottage in the whole country where a fugitive might not present himself at any hour with perfect security; if they could not conceal them, they gave them food, and guided them on their road. For none of these perilous services would they accept any reward; they were even seriously offended if any was offered.[1]

[1] Laroch. 350, 351. Beauch. ii. 267, 268.

Reflections on the extraordinary Successes of the Vendéans;

On reviewing the history of this melancholy war, nothing is so remarkable as the prodigious victories gained by the peasants in so sequestered a district, and the near approach they made to the re-establishment of the monarchy, contrasted with the feeble efforts and comparatively bloodless actions of the great military powers which combated on the frontier. Without the aid of mountains, fortresses, or any of the ordinary resources of war, undisciplined and inexperienced, destitute of cavalry, artillery, or military stores, without either magazines or money, they did more towards the overthrow of the Revolution than all the vast armies which Europe had assembled for its destruction. While the victories of the Allies or the Republicans were never attended with the loss of

more than three or four thousand men to their opponents, and seldom led to any other result than the overrunning of a province, or the reduction of a fortress, the triumphs of the Vendéans dissipated whole armies, were signalized often by the loss of ten and fifteen thousand men to the Republicans, made them masters of vast parks of artillery, and but for the inability of the chiefs to keep the peasants to their colours after any great success, would, by the admission of the Republicans themselves, have re-established the throne.[1] We pass at once in the same year, from the battles of Famars and Kayserslautern, to the triumphs of Marengo and Hohenlinden. Such were the astonishing results of the enthusiastic valour which the strong feelings of religion and loyalty produced in this gallant people; such the magnitude of the result, when, instead of cold calculation, vehement passion was brought into action.

[1] Jom. vi. 400.

And the Cause of their Disasters.

On the other hand, the ultimate result of this contest, notwithstanding the heroic efforts of the peasantry, is the strongest proof of the inability of mere valour, unaided by discipline, experience, and military resources, to contend permanently with a regular government. No future insurrection can be expected to display greater bravery, none be animated with a stronger spirit, none gain more glorious successes, than that of La Vendée. Yet all was unavailing. This great example should always be kept in mind in calculating on the probable results of popular enthusiasm, when opposed to the systematic efforts of discipline and organization. It was the want of these which proved fatal to the Vendéans. Had they possessed two or three fortified towns, they might have repaired, under their shelter, all their disasters; had they been masters of a regular army, they might have

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improved their victories into lasting conquests. The want of these two things rendered their triumphs unproductive of real advantages, and their defeats the forerunner of irreparable ruin. The war at a subsequent period, in Tyrol and Spain, demonstrated the same truth; while the durable successes of the Portuguese and Russian campaigns showed the vast results which arise from ingrafting the vigour of popular enthusiasm on the steady courage of regular forces. The conclusion to be drawn from this is, not that popular feeling can effect no lasting achievement, and that every thing in war depends on military organization, but that it is the combination of the two which is requisite to permanent success. In 1793, the discipline of Austria and Russia on the Rhine could effect nothing, because it was not animated by a vehement spirit; while the enthusiasm of La Vendée withered, because it was unsupported by regular organization. In 1812, the Russians combined both to resist the attack of an enemy tenfold greater, and the campaign of Moscow was the consequence.

Vendéan War finally commits the Revolution against Religion.

But though La Vendée fell, her blood was not shed in vain. The sword of the conqueror subdues the bodies, but it is often the heroism of the vanquished which subjugates the minds of men, and achieves conquests of eternal duration. The throne of Cæsar has passed away; but the blood of the Christian martyrs cemented a fabric of eternal duration;—the tyranny of Mary for a time crushed the religious freedom of England; but Latimer and Ridley lighted a fire which will never be extinguished. From the ashes of La Vendée has sprung the spirit which hurled Napoleon from his throne, and is destined to change the face of the moral world. It first put the cause of Revolution openly and irrevocably at war with that of Religion;

the friends of real freedom may thank it for permanently enlisting on their side a power which will never be subdued. From the atrocious severities of the Republican sway, in this devoted province, has arisen the profound hatred of all the believers in the Christian faith at their rule, and the stubborn spirit which was everywhere roused to resist it; the desolation of the Bocage was avenged by the Charnel House of Spain; the horrors of the Loire have been forgotten in the passage of the Berezina. Periods of suffering are in the end seldom lost either to the cause of truth, or the moral discipline of nations; it is the sunshine of prosperity which spreads the fatal corruption. Christianity withered under the titled hierarchy; but she shone forth in spotless purity from the revolutionary agonies of France; and that celestial origin which was obscured by the splendour of a prosperous, has been revealed in the virtues of a suffering age.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1793.—PART II.

FROM THE ROUT IN THE CAMP OF CÆSAR TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE CAMPAIGN.

ARGUMENT.

Principles of Carnot for the Conduct of the War—Aided by the effects of the Revolution—Vigorous Measures of the Government—Their efforts to rouse the whole Population—Great Levy of 1,200,000 Men ordered, and carried into effect—Carnot, War Minister—His Character—Retirement of Kaunitz at Vienna—Appointment of Thugut—His Character, and first measures—Incipient divisions of Prussia and Austria—Recognition of the Maritime Law by the Allies—Absurd Policy of the Allied Powers—The English insist upon dividing the Army—Its ruinous Consequences—They March to Dunkirk, and the Imperialists to Quesnoy—Quesnoy falls: but the Siege of Dunkirk is raised by the French—Bad Consequences of this Disaster—The Republicans do not follow up their success with vigour, and Houchard is arrested—Maubeuge is besieged—Jourdan takes the Command of the Army—Firm Conduct of the Convention—Jourdan approaches to raise the Siege—Battle of Watignies—Retreat of the Allies, and raising of the Siege—Conclusion of the Campaign in Flanders—Both Parties go into Winter Quarters—Pichegru appointed to the command of the Republicans—Campaign on the Rhine—Inactivity of the Prussians—French defeated at Pirmasenz, and their Lines are Stormed at Wiessenberg with a total Rout—Leads to no Results—Fort Vauban taken, and Landau blockaded by the Allies—Cruel Revenge of the French in Alsace—Divisions between the Prussians and Austrians—Able Measures of the French: they drive the Allies over the Rhine, and raise the Blockade of Landau—Campaign on the Spanish Frontier—On the Bidassoa—And Eastern Pyrenees—Invasion of Roussillon by the Spaniards—They are Defeated—Battle of Truellas, and Defeat of the French—Second Rout of the French, who fall back to Perpignan—Campaign in the Maritime Alps—Feeble Irruption of the Piedmontese on the side of Chambérry—Great Discontents in the South of France—Abortive Insurrection at Marseilles—Revolt at Toulon, which opens its Gates to the English—Revolt and Siege of Lyons—Great Efforts of the Republicans for its Reduction—Bombardment of the City, and Cruelty of the Besiegers—Dreadful Sufferings of the Inhabitants—Their heroic Efforts—Precy forces his way through the Besiegers' Line—Town Capitulates—Sanguinary Measures of the Convention to the Inhabitants—Collot d'Herbois' Proceedings—His atrocious Cruelty—Terrible Measures of the Revolutionary Tribunal there—Metrillades of the Prisoners—Vast Numbers who thus perished—Siege of Toulon—Allies assemble for its Defence—Progress of the Siege—Decisive Measures of Napoleon—Capture of the exterior Forts—Despair of the Inhabitants—Burning of the Arsenal and Fleet—Horrors of the Evacuation—Dreadful Cruelty of the Republicans—General Reflections on the Issue of the Campaign.

"CARNOT," said Napoleon, "has organized victory." It was the maxim of this great man, "That nothing was so easy as to find excellent officers in all ranks, if they were only chosen according to their capacity and their courage. For this reason, he took the utmost pains to make himself acquainted with their names and character; and such was the extent of his information, that it was rare for a soldier of merit to escape him, even though only a simple private. He deemed it impossible, that an army, commanded by officers chosen exclusively from a limited class of society, could long maintain a contest with one led by those chosen with discernment from the inferior ranks. Such commanders as Turenne and Condé seemed too rare to be calculated upon with any degree of certainty from a privileged class; while the mine of talent which lay hid in the lower stages of society, presented inexhaustible resources."[1]

Carnot's principles for conducting the War.

[1] Carnot, 31, 32.

This principle being founded on the eternal laws of nature, is of universal application. It constitutes the great superiority of Republican over Monarchical forces; and when once armies have been organized, and thoroughly disciplined on this footing, they never can be successfully resisted but by troops in whom the same military virtues have been developed. Supposing the abilities of the higher orders to be equal to those of an equal number in the inferior, it is impossible that they can ever produce as great a mass of talent as will emerge on a free competition from the numerous ranks of their humble competitors. A hundred thousand men can never produce as many energetic characters as ten millions.

The French Revolution, by opening the career of talent to all ranks indiscriminately, and affording the means of elevation, in a peculiar manner, to the most

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energetic and audacious characters, was eminently favourable to the growth of military prowess. The distress consequent on the closing of so many branches of industry, the agitation arising from the dissolution of all the bonds of society, the restless habits acquired by successful revolt, all conspired to spread a taste for military exploit, and fill the ranks of the army with needy but ardent adventurers. Such dispositions are always prevalent during civil dissensions, because it is the nature of such conflicts to awaken the passions, and disqualify for the habits of ordinary life. But they were in an especial manner excited by the campaign of 1793, first by the call which resounded through France to defend the state, and next by the thirst for military glory which sprung up by the defeat of the invasion.

Aided by the effects of the Revolution.

Feb. 6.

When invasion had, on every side, pierced the territory of France, and civil war tore its bosom, the Government took the most energetic steps to meet the danger. The Convention had armed the Committee of Public Safety with a power more terrible than ever had been wielded by an Eastern Conqueror; and the decrees of the Legislature corresponded to the energy of their measures. They felt, in the language of Danton, "That the head of Louis was the terrible gauntlet which they had thrown down to the Monarchs of Europe: that life or death was in the struggle." The whole power of France was called forth; ten thousand committees, spread over every part of the country, carried into execution the despotic mandates of the Committee of Public Safety, and its resistless powers wrung not less out of its sufferings than its patriotism the means of successful resistance.[1]

Vigorous Measures of the Government.

[1] Jom. iii. 25. Th. v. 207. Mig. i. 248.

No situation could be more perilous than that in which the Revolutionary government was now placed.

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No less than 280,000 men were in the field on the side of the Allies, from Basle to Dunkirk; the ancient barrier of France was broken by the capture of Valenciennes and Condè; Mayence gave the invaders a secure passage into the heart of the country, while Toulon and Lyons had raised the standard of revolt, and a devouring fire consumed the heart of the Western provinces. Sixty thousand insurgents in La Vendée threatened Paris in the rear, while 180,000 Allies in front seemed prepared to encamp under its walls. The forces of the Republic were not only inferior in number, but their discipline and equipment were in the most dilapidated state.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 21, 24. Th. v. 170.

Their Efforts to rouse the whole population.

All the deficiencies of the Republic in numbers and organization were speedily supplied, by the extraordinary energy and ability which rose to the head of military affairs, after the insurrection of 31st May, and the establishment of the Committee of Public Safety. Barrere, on the part of that able body, declared in the Assembly, "Liberty has become the creditor of every citizen: some owe it their industry; others their fortune; some their councils; others their arms; all their lives. Every native of France, of whatever age or sex, is called to the defence of his country. All moral and physical powers; all political and industrial resources, are at its command. Let every one then occupy his post in the grand national and military movement which is in preparation. The young men will march to the frontiers; the more advanced forge the arms, transport the baggage and artillery, or provide the subsistence requisite for their defence. The women will make the tents, the dresses of the soldiers, and carry their beneficent labours into the interior of the hospitals; even the hands of infancy may be usefully employed; and the aged, imi-

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tating the example of ancient virtue, will cause themselves to be transported into the public places, to animate the youth by their exhortations and their example. Let the national edifices be converted into barracks, the public squares into workshops, the cellars into manufactories of saltpetre; let the saddle-horses be furnished for the cavalry, the draught-horses for the artillery; the fowling-pieces, the swords and pikes, will suffice for the service of the interior. The Republic is a besieged city; all its territory must become a vast camp." These energetic measures were not only adopted by the Assembly, but immediately carried into execution. France became an immense workshop, resounding with the note of military preparation; the roads were covered with conscripts hastening to the different points of assembly; fourteen armies, and 1,200,000 soldiers, were soon under arms. The whole property of the state, by means of confiscations, and the forced circulation of assignats, was put at the disposal of the government; the insurgent population everywhere threw the better classes into captivity, while bands of revolutionary ruffians, paid by the state, perambulated every village in its territory, and wrung from the terrified inhabitants unqualified submission to the despotic Republic. At the same time, the means of raising supplies were provided with equal energy. All the old claims on the state were converted into a great Revolutionary debt, in which the new could not be distinguished from the ancient creditors. A forced tax of a milliard, or L. 40,000,000 sterling, was instantly ordered to be levied from the rich, which was realized in paper, secured at once on the national domains. As the prices of every article, even those of the first necessity, were altogether deranged by these measures, and the pros-

Great levy of 1,200,000 Men ordered and executed.

pect of famine was everywhere immediate, the Municipalities throughout France were invested with the power of seizing subsistence, and merchandise of every kind, in the hands of the owners, and compelling their sale for a fixed price in assignats; in other words, taking them for an elusory payment. The great object of all these measures was at once to repel the foreign invasion, and render the national domains an immediate fund of income, at a time when purchasers could not be found; and it must be confessed, that never did a government adopt such vast and energetic measures to attain these objects.[1]

[1] Hard. 278. Mig. ii. 287 Jom. iv. 22, 23. Th. v. 207, 208.

Fear became the great engine for filling the ranks; the bayonets of the Allies appeared less formidable than the guillotine of the Convention; and safety, despaired of every where else, was found alone in the armies on the frontier. The destruction of property, the ruin of industry, the agonies of millions, appeared as nothing to men who wielded the engines of the Revolution; fortune or wealth have no weight with those who are engaged in a struggle of life and death.[2]

[2] Jom. iv. 21. Hard. ii. 279.

By a strange combination of circumstances, the ruin of commercial credit, the loss of the colonies, the stagnation of industry, the drying up of the sources of opulence, augmented the present resources of the government. Ruling an impoverished and bankrupt state, the Convention was for the time the richest power in Europe. Despotism, it is true, dries up the sources of future wealth; but it gives a command of present resources which no regular government can obtain. The immense debts of government were paid in paper money, issued at no expense, and bearing a forced circulation; the numerous confiscations gave a shadow of security to its engagements; the terrible right of requisition put every remnant of private

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wealth at its disposal; the conscription filled the army with all the youth of the state; terror and famine impelled voluntary multitudes into its ranks. Before them was the garden of hope; behind them a howling wilderness.

Carnot, War Minister. His character.

At the head of the military department was placed Carnot, a man whose extraordinary and unbending character contributed more than any other circumstance to the early success of the Revolutionary wars. Austere in character, unbending in disposition, republican in principle, he more nearly resembled the patriots of antiquity than any other statesman in modern times. It was his misfortune to be associated with Robespierre in the Committee of Public Safety, during the whole of the Reign of Terror; and his name, in consequence, stands affixed to many of the worst acts of that sanguinary tyrant; but he has solemnly asserted, and his character entitles the allegation to attention, that in the pressure of business he signed these documents without knowing what they contained; and that he saved more lives by his entreaties, than his colleagues destroyed by their severity.[1] He was the creator of the new military art in France, which Dumourier was only permitted to sketch, and Napoleon brought to perfection. Simple in his manners, unostentatious in his habits, incorruptible in his inclinations, he was alike superior to the love of wealth, the weakness of inferior, and the passion for power, the infirmity of noble minds. When called to the post of danger by the voice of his country, he never declined the peril: disdaining to court Napoleon, in the plenitude of his power, and alone voting against his Imperial crown, he fled to his assistance in the hour of distress, and tendered the aid to a falling, which he had refused to a conquering monarch. Intrusted with

[1] Carnot's Memoirs, 230.

the dictatorship of the armies, he justified his country's choice by victory; superior even to the triumphs he had won, he resigned with pleasure the possession of power to exercise his understanding in the abstract sciences, or renovate his heart by the impressions of country life. Almost alone of the illustrious men of the age, his character has emerged comparatively untainted from the Revolutionary cauldron; and history has to record with the pride due to real greatness, that after having wielded irresistible force, and withstood unfettered power, he died poor and unbefriended in a foreign land.[1]

[1] Thib. i.37. Carnot, 255. Dum. iv. 5, 6.

It was in the extraordinary energy and ability of the Committee of Public Safety,* joined to the ferment excited by the total overthrow of society, and the despotic power wielded by the Convention, that the real secret is to be found of the successful resistance by France to the formidable invasion of 1793. The inability of Napoleon to resist a similar attack in 1815, demonstrates this important truth, and should be a warning to future ages not to incur the same risk, in the hope of obtaining a similar triumph. Superior in military talent, heading a band of veterans, supported by a terrible name, he sought in vain to communicate to the empire, the energy which, under their iron grasp, had been brought into action in the Republic.[2] A rational being will never succeed in equalling the strength which, in a transport of frenzy, a madman can exert.

[2] Jom. iii. 6. Hard. ii. 278.

While such extraordinary and unheard of efforts were making in France to resist the invasion with which they were menaced, a change, fraught in its

Retirement of Kaunitz at Vienna.

* Their names were at first Barrere, Delmas, Breard, Cambon, Debry, Danton, Guyton Morveau, Tralliard, and Lacroix.—See Hard. ii. 277.

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ultimate results with important consequences, took place in the Imperial Government. Kaunitz, so long at the head of the Austrian cabinet, had survived his age; his cautious habits, veteran experience, and great abilities were inadequate to supply the want of that practical acquaintance with affairs which arises from having grown up under their influence. The French Revolution had opened up a new era in human affairs: the old actors, how distinguished soever, were unacquainted with the novel machinery, and unfit to play their parts in the mighty drama which was approaching. The veteran Austrian diplomatist retired from the helm, full of years, and loaded with honours, from a prudent disinclination to risk his great reputation in the stormy scenes which had already arisen.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 259, 260.

28th March 1793.

Thugut Foreign Minister at Vienna.

He was succeeded in the direction of foreign affairs by THUGUT, who long kept possession of the helm during the Revolutionary war. The son of a poor boatman at Lintz, he had, by the industry of his parents, been early placed at the school of oriental languages at Vienna, where his diligence and abilities attracted the notice of the Empress Maria Theresa. She recommended him to the director of the college, and at the age of fifteen he was attached as interpreter to the Austrian Embassy at Constantinople, from whence he gradually rose in the diplomatic line to the portfolio of foreign affairs. Though he had long resided at Paris, and was intimately connected with Mirabeau, whose conversion to the court was partly owing to his exertions, he maintained throughout his career an inflexible hostility to Republican principles; and though his combinations were not always crowned with success, his bitterest enemies cannot deny him the credit of a truly patriotic spirit, an energetic character, profound skill in diplomacy,[2] and a fidelity to

His Character,

[2] Hard. ii. 260, 269.

his engagements, as unusual as it was honourable in those days of weakness and tergiversation.

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His accession to office was soon followed by an evident increase of vigour in diplomatic measures. Pressing notes to the inferior German Powers brought about the equipment of that tardy and inefficient force, the Germanic Contingents; while a menacing proclamation from the Diet of Ratisbon prohibited all circulation of French assignats or revolutionary writings, and ordered the immediate departure from their territory of all subjects of that country who could not give a sufficient reason for their residence. But though these measures might be well calculated to prevent the inundation of the empire with democratic principles, it was with very different weapons that the formidable army which had grown up out of the agonies of the Republic required to be combated.[1]

And first Measures.

22d March 1793.

[1] Hard. ii. 264, 274.

At the time, however, that the zeal of Austria was thus warming in the common cause, that of Prussia was rapidly cooling: and to the lukewarmness and indifference of this power in the contest with France, more than to any other cause, the extraordinary success which for some years attended the Republican arms is to be ascribed. The selfish ambition of the cabinets of Vienna, St Petersburg, and Berlin, was the cause of this unhappy disunion. Hardly was the ink of the treaty of the 14th July with Great Britain dry, when the hoisting of the Austrian flag on the walls of Valenciennes and Condé opened the eyes of the Prussian Ministry to the projects of aggrandizement which were entertained by the Imperial cabinet, and which Thugut supported with his whole talents and influence. Irritated and chagrined at this prospect of material accession of power to their dreaded rival, the cabinet of Berlin derived some consolation

Incipient divisions of Prussia and Austria.

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from the completion of their arrangements with the Empress Catherine for the partition of Poland, in virtue of which the Prussian force had recently taken possession of Dantzic, with its noble harbour and fortifications, besides Thorn, and a large circumjacent territory, to the no small annoyance of Austria, which saw itself excluded from all share in the projected spoliation. Nor was Russia likely to be a more disinterested combatant in the common cause; for she, too, was intent on the work of partition, and had already inundated the Duchy of Warsaw with troops, with the fixed design of rendering it the frontier of the Moscovite dominions. Thus, at the moment when the evident approach of peril to the national independence was closing those frightful divisions which had hitherto paralyzed the strength of France, the Allied powers, intent on separate projects of aggrandizement, were rapidly relaxing the bonds of the confederacy; and engaging in the most iniquitous partition recorded in modern times, at the very time when that vast power was arising, which was so soon destined to make them all tremble for their own possessions.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 332, 333.

Recognition of the Maritime Law by the Allies.

This stage of the contest was marked by an important step in the maritime relations of Europe, which afterwards became of the utmost moment in the important discussions on neutral rights which took place at the close of the century. The Empress Catherine publicly announced the departure of Russia from the principles of the armed neutrality, and her resolution to act on those usages which England had uniformly maintained in conformity with the practice of all belligerent states, formed the common naval code of Europe. She equipped a fleet of twenty-five ships of the line, which was destined to cruize in the Baltic and North

Seas, and whose instructions were "to seize all vessels, without distinction, navigating under the flag of the French Republic, or that of any other state which they might assume; and also *to arrest every neutral vessel* destined and loaded for a French harbour,—oblige them to retrace their steps, or make for the nearest neutral harbour which might suit their convenience." These instructions were publicly announced to the Prussian, Swedish, and Danish Courts;* and although the Cabinet of Copenhagen, which early perceived the advantages of the lucrative neutral commerce, which the general hostility was likely to throw into their hands, at first made some difficulties, yet they at length yielded, and all the maritime powers agreed to revert to the usages of war in regard to neutrals, which had existed prior to the armed Neutrality in 1780. By a declaration issued on June 8, the British Government

* M. Bernstorff declared to the Danish Cabinet, after announcing these instructions: "Her Imperial Majesty, in issuing such orders, cannot be supposed to have in the slightest degree deviated from the beneficent system, which is calculated to secure the interests of neutrals in war, seeing that it is noways applicable to the present circumstances. The French Revolutionists, after having overturned every thing in their own country, and bathed their impious hands in the blood of their sovereign, have, by a public decree, declared themselves the allies of every people who shall commit similar atrocities, and has followed this up by attacking with an armed force all its neighbours. Neutrality cannot exist with such a power, except in so far as it may be assumed from prudential considerations. Should there be any states whose situation does not permit them to make such efficacious efforts as the greater powers in the common cause, the least that can be required of them is, that they shall make use of such means as are evidently at their disposal, by abstaining from all commerce or intercourse with these disturbers of the public peace. Her Imperial Majesty feels herself the more entitled to exact these sacrifices, as she has cheerfully submitted to them herself: being well aware of the disastrous effects which would ensue to the common interest, if, by reason of a free transport of provisions and naval stores, the enemy were put in possession of the means of prolonging and nourishing the contest. —See Ann. Reg. xxxiii. State Papers, No. 41. and Hard. ii. 337, 341.

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enjoined its naval commanders to search all neutral vessels bound for France for articles contraband of war; and Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia, successively adopted the same principles. The latter power, in particular, declared, in a note to Count Bernstorff, intended to obviate the objections of the Cabinet of Denmark, "His Majesty the King of Prussia, who has no interest but what is common with the King of Great Britain, can make no objection to the principles which circumstances have caused the Court of London to adopt relative to the commerce of neutrals during the present war with France. The undersigned, in acceding absolutely and without limitation to all the demands of the British ambassador, obeys the express injunctions of his Court, in the most solemn manner, in order to prove to the world the perfect concert which in that, as in all other respects, prevails between the King of Prussia and the King of Great Britain. Thus, how loudly soever the maritime powers may have demanded a new maritime code as a restraint on the hostility of others when they were neutral, they were willing enough to revert to the old usages, when they in their turn became the belligerent parties.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 334, 341.

Absurd Policy of the Allies.

If the conduct of the Allies had been purposely intended to develope the formidable military strength which had grown upon the French Republic, they could not have adopted measures better calculated to effect their object than were actually pursued. Four months of success, which might have been rendered decisive, had been wasted in blameable inactivity; after having broken the frontier line of fortresses, and defeated the covering army of France in a pitched battle, when within fifteen marches of Paris, and at the head of a splendid army of 130,000 men, they thought fit to separate their forces, and instead

English insist on dividing the Army.

of pushing on to the centre of the Republican power, pursue independent plans of aggrandizement. The English, with their Allies, amounting to above thirty-five thousand men, moved towards Dunkirk, so long the object of their maritime jealousy, while forty-five thousand of the Imperialists sat down before Quesnoy, and the remainder of their vast army was broken into detachments to preserve the communications.[1] 11th Aug.

[1] Jom. iv. 35. Hard. ii. 401. Th. v. 218, 219.

From this ruinous division may be dated all the subsequent disasters of the campaign. Had they held together, and pushed on vigorously against the masses of the enemy's forces, now severely weakened and depressed by defeat, there cannot be a doubt that the object of the war would have been gained. The decrees for levying the population *en masse* were not passed by the Convention for some weeks afterwards, and the forces they produced were not organized for three months. The mighty genius of Carnot had not as yet assumed the helm of affairs; the Committee of Public Safety had not yet acquired its terrible energy; every thing promised great results to vigorous and simultaneous operations. It was a resolution of the English cabinet in opposition to the declared and earnest wish of Cobourg and all the Allied Generals which occasioned this fatal division. The impartial historian must confess with a sigh, that it was British interests which here interfered with the great objects of the war, and that by compelling the English contingent to separate for the siege of Dunkirk, England contributed to postpone, for twenty years, its glorious termination. Posterity has had ample room to lament the error; a war of twenty years deeply checkered with disaster; the addition of six hundred millions to the public debt; the sacrifice of millions of brave men, may be in a great degree traced to this unhappy resolution.[2]

The English besiege Dunkirk, the Austrians Quesnoy.

Ruinous effects of the division.

[2] Jom. iv. 26, 27, 28. Toul. iv. 49. Ann. Reg. 1793, 377. Jom. iv. 37. Hard. ii. 346, 347, 350.

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The Austrians were successful in their enterprise. After fifteen days of open trenches, Quesnoy capitulated, and the garrison, consisting of four thousand men, were made prisoners of war. The efforts of the Republicans to raise the siege terminated in nothing but disasters. Two columns of ten thousand men each, destined to disquiet the besiegers, were routed, and in one of them, a square of three thousand men broken, and totally destroyed by the Imperial cavalry.[1]

Quesnoy Falls. Nov. 11.

[1] Jom. iv. 41.

But a very different fate awaited the British besieging army. The corps under the command of the Duke of York, consisting of twenty thousand British and Hanoverians, was raised, by the junction of a body of Austrians under Alvinzi, to thirty-seven thousand men. This force was inadequate to the enterprise, exposed as it was to attack from the main body of the French army. On the 18th August, the Duke of York arrived in the neighbourhood of Lincelles, where, after an obstinate engagement, a strong redoubt was carried by the English Guards, and twelve pieces of cannon taken. At the same time, the Dutch troops advanced under Marshal Freytag, and driving the enemy from his positions near Dunkirk, the Allies advanced to within a league of the place, and encamped at Furnes, extending from that place to the sand-hills on the sea shore. The place was immediately summoned, but the governor returned a determined refusal.[2]

But the Siege of Dunkirk is raised.

[2] Ann. Reg. 1793, 379, 380. Jom. iv. 41, 45.

Sensible of the importance of this fortress, which, if gained by the English, would have given them an easy inlet into the heart of France, the Republicans made the most vigorous efforts to raise the siege.*

* "It is not," said Carnot, in a dispatch to Houchard, "merely in a military point of view, that Dunkirk is so important: it is far more so, because the national honour is involved in its relief. Pitt cannot prevent the Revolution which is approaching in England, but by

This was the more necessary, because the works of the place were in the most deplorable state when the Allies appeared before it, and the garrison, consisting only of three thousand men, was totally insufficient to defend the town; and if the bombarding flotilla had arrived from England at the same time with the besieging army, there can be no doubt that it would immediately have fallen. Immense preparations were making at Woolwich for the siege, and eleven new battalions had been embarked in the Thames for the besieging army; but such was the tardiness of their movements, that not a vessel appeared in sight at the harbour of Dunkirk, and the mistress of the seas had the mortification to find her land forces severely harassed by discharges from the contemptible gun-boats of the enemy. The delays of the English in these operations proved what novices they were in the art of war, and how little they were aware of the importance of time in military movements. Above three weeks were employed in preparations for the siege, a delay which enabled the French to bring up from the distant frontier of the Moselle the forces who ultimately raised the siege.[1]

[1] Th. v. 220. Jom. iv. 46. Ann. Reg. 1793, 380. Hard. ii. 366.

The French rulers did not discover the same inactivity. Following the wise course of accumulating overwhelming forces upon the decisive point, they brought thirty-five thousand men, by forced marches, from the armies of the Rhine and the Moselle, and placed the army destined to raise the siege, consisting by this addition of nearly fifty thousand men, under the command of General Houchard. The investment

gaining that town to indemnify that country for the expenses of the war. Accumulate, therefore, immense forces in Flanders, and drive the enemy from its plains: the decisive point of the contest lies there. —Hard. ii 365.

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not having been completed, he succeeded in throwing ten thousand additional troops, on whose fidelity reliance could be placed, into the garrison; while the covering army, consisting of twenty thousand Dutch and Austrians, under the command of Marshal Freytag, was threatened by an attacking force of nearly double its amount.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 380. Th. v. 220. 239. Jom. iv. 51.

While the Republicans were thus adopting the system of concentrating their forces, the Allies, by the expansion of theirs, gave it every possible chance of success. An hundred thousand men, dispersed round Quesnoy, and extending from the sea to the Moselle, guarded all the entrances into the Netherlands, and covered a line two hundred miles in length. Thus, 120,000 men were charged at once with the covering of two sieges, the maintenance of that immense line, and the protection of all Flanders, from an enterprising enemy, possessing an interior line of communication, and already acting upon the principle of accumulating an overwhelming force upon the decisive point.[2]

[2] Th v. 238, 239.

The situation of the Allied covering army was such, as to give to a vigorous attack, by an imposing mass of assailants, every chance of success. Freytag's corps of observation was, in the end, not posted at Furnes, so as to protect the rear of the besiegers, but at a considerable distance in front of it, in order to prevent any communication between the besieged and the interior of France; while the Dutch, under the Prince of Orange, were at the distance of three days' march at Menin, and incapable of rendering any assistance; and the Duke of York's besieging force lay exposed to an attack between these dispersed bodies. The Committee of Public Safety had enjoined Houchard to adopt that plan, to throw himself, with forty thou-

sand men, between the three corps, and fall successively on Freytag, the Prince of Orange, and the Duke of York; and Napoleon would unquestionably have done so if he had been at the head of the army of Italy, and signalized Dunkirk, in all probability, by as decisive success as Rivoli or Arcola. But that audacious mode of proceeding could not be expected from a second in command, and the principles on which it was founded were not yet understood, nor were his troops adequate to so bold an enterprise. He contented himself, therefore, with marching against the front of Freytag, with a view to throw him back on the besieging force, and raise the siege, instead of interposing between them and destroying both. The object to be thus attained was important, and its achievement proved the salvation of France, but it fell very far short of the great success expected by the French government; and the failure of the Republican general to enter into the spirit of their orders, at length brought him to the scaffold.[1]

[1] Th. v. 239, 240. Hard. ii. 370, 371.

The attack was commenced on Marshal Freytag in the beginning of September. A series of engagements took place, from the 5th to the 7th September, between the French and the covering army, which terminated unfavourably to the Allies; and at length, on the morning of the 8th, a decisive attack was made by General Houchard on the main body of the Austrians, consisting of nearly eighteen thousand men, near Hondscoote, in which the latter were defeated with the loss of fifteen hundred men.[2]

Sept. 5 to 7.

[2] Toul. iv. 53, 54. Jom. iv. 54, 60. Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 381. Th. v. 242, 243.

Meanwhile, the garrison of Dunkirk, acting in concert with the external army, made a vigorous sally on the besiegers, with forces superior to their own, and exposed them to the most imminent peril. The Duke of York, finding his flank exposed to the attacks of

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Houchard by the defeat of the covering force, justly deemed his situation too precarious to risk a farther stay in the lines, and on the night of the 8th, withdrew his besieging force, leaving fifty-two pieces of heavy artillery, and a large quantity of ammunition and baggage, to the conquerors.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 53, 54. Jom. iv. 61. Ann. Reg. 1793, p 381. Th. v. 243, 244.

The consequences of this defeat proved ruinous to the whole campaign. It excited the most extravagant joy at Paris, and elevated the public spirit to a degree great in proportion to their former depression. The dislodging of a few thousand men at the extremity of the line, changed the face of the war from the German to the Mediterranean Sea. The Convention, relieved from the dread of immediate danger, and the peril of invasion, got time to mature its plans of foreign conquest, and organize the immense military preparations in the interior; and Fortune, weary of a party which threw away the opportunities of receiving her favours, passed over to the other side.[2]

Ruinous Consequences of this Disaster.

[2] Toul. iv. 55. Th. v. 245.

Houchard, however, did not improve his advantages as might have been expected. Instead of following up the plan of concentrating his forces upon a few points, he renewed the system of division, which had been so imprudently adopted by his adversaries. The forces of the Duke of York, in the camp to which he retired, being deemed too powerful for an immediate attack, he resolved to assail a corps of Dutch who were posted at Menin. A series of actions, with various success, in consequence ensued between the detached corps of the Allies, which kept up the communication between the Duke of York's army and the main body of the Imperialists under Prince Cobourg.

Republicans do not follow up their success with vigour.

Sept. 12.

On the one hand, the Dutch, overwhelmed by superior masses of the enemy, were defeated with the loss of two thousand men, and forty pieces of cannon;

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while, on the other, General Beaulieu totally routed the army of Houchard at Courtray, and drove him behind the Lys. Nor did the disaster rest there. The panic communicated itself to all the camps, all the divisions; and the army which had lately raised the siege of Dunkirk, sought shelter in a promiscuous crowd under the cannon of Lisle—a striking proof of the unfitness of the Republican levies as yet for field operations, and of the ease with which, by energetic operations in large masses at that period, the greatest successes might have been obtained by the numerous and disciplined armies of the Allies, if acting together or in concert, and led by an able commander.[1]

Sept. 15.

[1] Jom. iv. 55, 65, 66. An. Reg. 1793, 383. Th. v. 246, 247. Hard. ii. 369.

This last disaster proved fatal to General Houchard, already charged with culpable inactivity, in not following up the advantages at Hondscoote, by an immediate attack upon the British force. Accused by his own officers, he was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Paris, condemned and executed. The English had sacrificed Admiral Byng for having suffered a defeat; the Romans had condemned Manlius for having fought in disobedience to the orders of the Senate; but this was the first instance in history of a victorious general having been put to death for gaining a success, which proved the salvation of his country.[2]

And Houchard is arrested and executed.

[2] Jom. iv.

The proceedings of the Convention against this unfortunate general, are chiefly interesting from the evidence they afford of the clear perception which those at the head of affairs had obtained of the principles in the military art, to which the subsequent successes of the Republican forces were chiefly owing. "For long," said Barrere, "the principle established by the great Frederick, has been recognized, that the best way to take advantage of the courage of the soldier,

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is to accumulate the troops in particular points in large masses. Instead of doing this, you have divided them into separate detachments, and the generals intrusted with their command have generally had to combat superior forces. The Committee of Public Safety, fully aware of the danger, had sent the most positive instructions to the generals to fight in large masses; you have disregarded their orders, and, in consequence, reverses have followed."[1] From these expressions, it is not difficult to recognize the influence which the master mind of Carnot had already acquired in the direction of military affairs.

[1] Jom. iv.69. Toul.iv.130.

Maubeuge is besieged. 29th Sept.

To compensate so many reverses, the Allies at length sat down before Maubeuge; an important fortress, the possession of which would have opened the plains of St Quintin and the capital to invasion, and which, undertaken at an earlier period, and by the main strength of their forces, would have determined, in all probability, the success of the war. Landrecy was already blockaded, and the French troops, avowedly inferior in the field, were all concentrated in intrenched camps within their own frontier. A vigorous effort was indispensable, to prevent the Allies from carrying these strongholds, and taking up their winter quarters, without opposition, in the French territory.[2]

[2] Toul. iv 133 134. Jom. iv.112. 114.

Jourdan takes the Command of the Army.

In these alarming circumstances, the Committee of Public Safety alone did not despair of the fortunes of the Republic. Trusting with confidence in their own energy, and the immense multitudes of the levies ordered, they took the most vigorous measures for the public defence, and, by incessantly urging on the new conscripts, soon raised the forces in the different intrenched camps, on the Flemish frontier, to 130,000 men. Great part, it is true, formed but a motley

group; peasants, without arms or uniforms, fiercely debating every question of politics, forming themselves into battalions, and choosing their own officers, presented a force little competent to face, in the open field, the regular forces of Austria and the Confederation. But the possession of so many fortified towns and intrenched camps gave them the means of organizing and disciplining the tumultuary masses, and enabled the regular troops, amounting to 100,000 men, to keep the field. At the head of the whole was placed General JOURDAN, a young officer, hitherto untried, but who, placed between victory and the scaffold, had sufficient confidence in his own talents to accept the perilous alternative.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 134. Jom. iv. 114, 115, 116.

At the same time, the most energetic measures were taken by the Committee of Public Safety. All France was declared in a state of siege, and the authorities authorized to take all the steps necessary to provide for the public defence in such an emergency. "The revolutionary laws," said Robespierre, "must be executed with rapidity; delay and inactivity have been the cause of our reverses. Thenceforward, the time allowed for the execution of the laws must be fixed, and delay punished with death." St Just drew a sombre picture of the state of the Republic, and the necessity of striving vigorously against the manifold dangers which surrounded them. Having excited the highest degree of terror in the Assembly, they obtained their consent to the following resolutions:—That the subsistence requisite for each department, should be accurately estimated, and all the superfluity placed at the disposal of the State, and subjected to forced requisitions, either for the armies, the cities, or departments, that stood in need of it: that these requisitions should be exclusively regulated by a commis-

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sion appointed for that purpose by the Convention: that Paris should be provisioned for a year; a tribunal instituted for the trial of all those who should commit any offence against these measures, destined to provide for the public subsistence: that the government of France should be declared revolutionary, till the conclusion of a general peace, and, until that arrived, a dictatorial power be invested in the Committee of Public Safety, and the Convention; and that a revolutionary army, consisting of six thousand men, and twelve hundred cannoneers, should be established at Paris, and cantoned there at the expense of the more opulent among the citizens. It was proposed in the Cordeliers, that to this should be added a provision for the establishment of a moving guillotine, to be attached to every army; but this was not adopted by the Convention. The revolutionary army was instantly raised, and composed of the most ardent Jacobins; and the Commission of Subsistence installed in its important and all-powerful sovereignty.[1]

[1] Th. v. 278, 280.

The force of the Allies was still above 120,000 strong; and displayed a numerous and splendid array of cavalry, to which there was nothing comparable on the side of the Republicans. But after taking into account the blockading and besieging forces, and those stationed at a distance, they could not bring above sixty thousand into the field. This army was, early in October, concentrated between Maubeuge and Avennes, where they awaited the approach of the enemy destined to raise the siege.[2]

[2] Toul. iv. 135. Jom. iv. 121.

Firm conduct of the Convention.

This measure was now become indispensably necessary, as the condition of the garrison of Maubeuge was daily growing more desperate, and the near approach of the besiegers' batteries had spread terror in the city, and discouragement among the soldiers.

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Imitating the firmness of the Roman Senate, the Convention had sold the estates of the emigrants on which the Allies were encamped, and sent the most peremptory orders to Jourdan, to attack, without delay, the enemy's force, and drive him out of the French territory. The Duke of York, too, hearing of the concentration of the Republican force, was rapidly advancing with above twenty-five thousand men, and unless the attack was speedily made, it was certain that his force would be joined to the Allied Army.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 118, 120. 129.

Jourdan advances to raise the Siege.

Impelled by so many motives, Jourdan approached the Austrian position, the key of which was the village of Wattignies. After some skirmishing on the 14th, a general battle took place on the 15th October, in which, after various success, the Republicans were worsted with the loss of twelve hundred men. Instructed by this failure, that a change of the method of attack was indispensable, Jourdan, in the night, accumulated his forces against the decisive point, and at break of day, on the 16th, assailed Wattignies with three columns, while a concentric fire of artillery shattered the troops who defended it. In the midst of the roar of cannon, which were discharged with uncommon vigour, the Republican airs could be distinctly heard by the Austrians, which rose from the French lines. The village was speedily carried by this skilful concentration of force, while, at the same time, the appearance of the reserve of Jourdan on the left flank of the Allies, completed the discouragement of Cobourg, and induced a general retreat, after sustaining a loss of six thousand men. This resolution was unfortunate and unnecessary, for, on other points, his army had been eminently successful, and the arrival of the Duke of York, who was within a day's march, would have enabled him to maintain his position, and

Battle of Wattignies 16th Oct. 1793.

Retreat of the Allies, and Raising of the Siege.

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convert his partial into a total success. It is related in Roman History, that, on one occasion, after a doubtful battle, some god called out in the night, that they had lost one man less than their enemies, and in consequence they kept their ground, and gained all the advantages of a victory: how often does such tenacious firmness convert an incipient disaster into important advantage.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 406, 409. Jom. iv. 134, 135. Th. v. 328, 330. Toul. iv. 136, 138.

The raising of the siege, and retreat of the Allies beyond the Sambre, exposed to view the gigantic works which they had constructed for the reduction of the city, and which, with a little more vigour on their part, in concentrating their forces, would undoubtedly have proved successful. As it was, the success of the Republicans, on this point, counterbalanced the alarming intelligence received from other quarters, and allayed a dangerous ferment which was commencing in the capital.[2]

[2] Toul. iv. 136, 137. Th. v. 328. 332. Jom. iv. 130, 135.

The advantage gained by the Republicans in this action, proved how incompetent the old and methodical tactics of the Imperialists were to contend with the new and able system which Carnot had introduced into their armies, and which their immense levies enabled them to execute with reckless audacity. Jourdan had nearly sixty thousand men to raise the siege. By leaving only fifteen thousand to man the works, Cobourg might have opposed to him an equal force; and an action, under such circumstances, from the great inferiority of the French in discipline, would infallibly have led to a defeat, which would speedily have brought about the reduction of the town. Instead of which, by leaving thirty-five thousand round the town, he exposed himself with only thirty thousand men to the shock of sixty thousand Republicans, and ultimately was compelled to raise the siege.[3]

[3] Th. v. 332.

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Nothing more of importance was undertaken in Flanders before the close of the campaign; a movement of the French, threatening the right of the Allies towards the sea, was not persisted in, and, after various unimportant changes, both parties went into winter quarters. The headquarters of Cobourg were established at Bavay; those of the Republicans at Guicè, where a vast intrenched camp was formed for the protection and disciplining of the revolutionary masses, which were daily arriving for the army. Insatiable in their expectations of success, the Committee of Public Safety removed Jourdan from the supreme command, and conferred it on PICHEGRU, an officer distinguished in the campaign on the Rhine, a favourite of Robespierre and St Just, and possessed of the talent, activity, and enterprise suited to those perilous times, when the risk was greater to a commander from domestic tyranny, than foreign warfare.[1]

Conclusion of the Campaign in Flanders: both Parties go into Winter Quarters.

Pichegru appointed Commander.

[1] Jom. iv. 134. 148.

After the capture of Mayence, the Imperialists, reinforced by forty thousand excellent troops, who had been employed in the siege of that city, could have assembled 100,000 men, for offensive operations in the plains of the Palatinate, while those of the enemy did not exceed eighty thousand. Every thing promised success to vigorous operations; but the Allies, paralyzed by intestine divisions, remained in an inexplicable state of inactivity, and separated their fine army into four corps, which were placed opposite to the lengthened lines of their adversaries. The Prussians were chiefly to blame for this torpor: they had secretly adopted the resolution, now that Mayence, the barrier of Northern Germany, had fallen, to contribute no farther efficient aid to the prosecution of the war. For two months they remained there in perfect inactivity, the jealousy of the sovereigns, concerning the

Campaign on the Rhine. Inactivity of the Prussians.

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affairs of Poland, being equalled by the rivalry of the generals for the command of the armies. Both monarchies had bitter cause afterwards to lament this inaction; for never again were their own armies on the Rhine so formidable, or those of the Republicans in such a state of disorganization.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 75. 78. 91. Hard. ii. 342.

Wearied at length with the torpor of their opponents, and pressed by the reiterated orders of the Convention to undertake something decisive, the French General, Moreau, who commanded the army of the Moselle, commenced an attack on the Prussian corps posted at Permasins. The Republican columns advanced with intrepidity to the attack, but when they reached the Prussian redoubts, a terrible storm of grape arrested their advance; and at the same time their flanks were turned by the Duke of Brunswick, and a heavy fire of artillery carried disorder into their masses, which soon fell back, and precipitated themselves in confusion into the neighbouring ravines. In this affair the Republicans lost four thousand men, and twenty-two pieces of cannon; a disaster which might have proved fatal to the campaign, had it been as much improved as it was neglected by the Allied Commanders.[2]

Sept. 14.

French defeated at Permasin.

[2] Jom. iv. 88. 91. Toul. iv. 138. 140.

The King of Prussia, a few days after, left the army to repair to Poland, in order to pursue, in concert with Russia, his plans of aggrandizement at the expense of that unhappy country; and the Allies, having at length agreed on a plan of operations, resumed offensive operations. The French occupied the ancient and celebrated lines of Weissenberg, constructed in former times for the protection of the Rhenish frontier from German invasion. They stretched from the town of Lauterburg on the Rhine, through the village of Weissenberg to the Vosges Mountains, and thus

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closed all access from that side into Alsace. For four months that they had been occupied by the Republicans, all the resources of art had been employed in strengthening them. The recent successes of the Allies had brought them to the extreme left of this position, and they formed the design of attacking it from left to right, and forcing an abandonment of the whole intrenchments. A simultaneous assault was made by the Prussians, under the Duke of Brunswick, on the left of the lines, by the defiles in the Vosges Mountains, while the Austrians, under Prince Waldeck, crossed the Rhine, and turned the right, and Wurmser himself, with the main body, endeavoured to force the centre. The attack on the right by Lauterburg, obtained only a momentary success; but Wurmser carried several redoubts in the centre, and soon got possession of Weissenberg; and the left having been turned and forced back, the whole army retired in confusion, and some of the fugitives fled as far as Strasburg. Such was the tardiness of the Allies, that the French lost only one thousand men in this general rout, which, if duly improved, might have occasioned the ruin of their whole army.[1]

Their lines are stormed at Weissenberg.

They are totally routed.

[1] Hard. ii. 424, 425. Toul. iv. 140, 141, 142. Jom. iv. 96, 97. 104.

But this important success, which once more opened the territory of the Republic to a victorious enemy, and spread the utmost consternation through the towns of Alsace, led to no results; and by developing the designs of Austria upon this province, contributed to widen the breach between that power and her wavering ally. Although, therefore, a powerful reaction commenced among the nobles in Alsace, and a formidable party was formed in Strasburg, to favour the imperial projects, nothing material was undertaken by their armies. Wurmser wasted in festivity and rejoicings the precious moments of incipient terror; the

Leads to no Results.

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Convention got time to recover from their alarm, and the Committee of Public Safety took the most energetic measures to restore the democratic fervour in the shaken districts. A Revolutionary force, under the command of a ferocious leader, traversed the province, confiscating without mercy the property of the suspected individuals, and spreading, by the multitude of their arrests, the fear of death before every individual. "Marat," said Bandet, "has only demanded 200,000 heads; were they a million, we would furnish them." To take advantage of the ferment occasioned by those menaces, Wurmser advanced to the neighbourhood of Strasburg, where the whole constituted authorities offered to surrender it to the Imperialists, in the name of Louis XVII. The Austrian Commander, however, fettered by orders from Vienna, which prohibited him from doing any thing which might prejudice their system of methodical conquest, declined to take possession of the city on these terms, and moved the Prussians to Saverne, in order to force back the Republicans who were accumulating on that point. This project, however, proved unsuccessful; the Prussians were driven back, and Wurmser, unable to undertake the siege of Strasburg by force, was obliged to withdraw, and confine his operations to the blockade of Landau and siege of Fort Vauban, which capitulated with its garrison of three thousand men on the 14th November. The inhabitants of Strasburg, thus abandoned to their fate, experienced the whole weight of Republican vengeance; seventy persons of the most distinguished families were put to death, while terror and confiscation reinstated the sway of the Convention over that unhappy province. No sooner was the extent of the conspiracy ascertained, than St Just and Le Bas were despatched by the Convention, and spee-

Fort Vauban taken, and Landau blockaded.

Cruel revenge of the French in Alsace.

dily put in force the terrific energy of the Revolution. The blood of the royalists immediately flowed in torrents; it was a sufficient ground for condemnation, that any inhabitant had remained in the village occupied by the Allies; and a fourth of the families of the province, decimated by the guillotine, fled into the neighbouring districts of Switzerland, and were speedily enrolled in the tables of proscription.[1]

[1] Hard ii. 425, 426. Toul. iv. 143, 144, 186. Th. vi. 48, 49. Jom. iv. 104, 105, 111, 150.

The secession of Prussia from the confederacy now became daily more and more evident. Wurmser in vain endeavoured to rouse them to any combined movements; orders from the Cabinet constrained the Duke of Brunswick to a line of conduct, as prejudicial to his fame as a commander, as it was injurious to the character of his country. On his return to Berlin, Frederic William was assailed by so many representations from his ministers as to the deplorable state of the finances, and the exhaustion of the national strength, in a contest foreign to the real interests of the nation, at the very time when the affairs of Poland required their undivided attention, and the greatest possible display of force in that quarter, that he at first adopted the resolution to recall all his troops from the Rhine, except the small contingent which he was bound to furnish as a Prince of the empire; and orders to that effect were actually transmitted to the Prussian General. The Cabinet of Vienna, informed of their danger, made the most pressing remonstrances against such an untimely and ruinous defection, in which they were so well seconded by those of London and St Petersburg, that this resolution was rescinded, and, in consideration of a large Austrian subsidy, engaged to continue the contest. But orders were nevertheless given to the Duke of Brunswick to temporize as much as possible, and engage the Prus-

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sian troops in no serious enterprise, or any conquest which might turn to the advantage of the Austrians: the effect of which soon appeared in the removal of the Prussian mortars and cannon from the lines before Landau, at the moment when the bombardment was going on with the greatest prospect of success. Shortly after they withdrew so large a part of the blockading force, that the garrison was enabled to communicate freely with the adjacent country.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 425, 431.

Meanwhile the Committee of Public Safety, very different from their tardy and divided opponents, did not confine their views to the subjugation of the Royalists in Alsace. They aspired to the complete deliverance of the Republican territory from the enemy's forces. To raise the blockade of Landau, thirty thousand men from the armies of the Moselle and the Rhine, were placed under the orders of Pichegru, who were destined to penetrate the Allied lines between the cantonments of the Austrian and Prussian forces; and these were supported by thirty-five thousand under General Hoche, who advanced from the side of La Sarre. After some preparatory movements, and various success, and many partial actions, the Republicans attacked the covering army of the Duke of Brunswick, in great force, on the morning of the 26th December, who were in position near the castle of Geisberg, a little in front of Weissenberg. Such was the dissension between the two commanders, in consequence of the evident reluctance of the Prussians to engage, that a warm altercation took place between them, in presence of their respective officers, on the field of battle. The result, as might have been expected, was, that the Allies, vigorously attacked in their centre, were driven from their positions; and after some ineffectual attempts to make a stand on the

Nov. 17.

Disunion of the Allies.

Dec. 26.

Allies driven over the Rhine, and Siege of Landau raised.

Dec. 30.

left bank of the Rhine, their whole army, in great confusion, crossed to the right bank, at Philipsberg, after raising the blockade of Landau, leaving their recent conquest of Fort Vauban to its fate, and completely evacuating in that quarter the French territory. Spire and Worms were speedily reconquered, and Fort Vauban soon after evacuated. The Republican armies rapidly advancing, appeared before the gates of Manheim, and Germany, so recently victorious, began to tremble for its own frontier.[1]

Jan. 19, 1794. [2] Toul. iv. 221, 227. Jom. iv. 154, 160, 177. Th. vi. 48, 49.

These important results demonstrated the superior military combination which was now exerted on the part of the French to that of the Allies. Forty thousand Prussians and Saxons were in a state of inaction on the other side of the Vosges Mountains, while the Austrians, overmatched by superior and concentrated forces, were driven across the Rhine. The French accumulated forces from different armies, to break through one weakly defended point, while the Allies were in such a state of discord, that they could not, even in the extremest peril, render any effectual assistance to each other.*[2] It was not difficult to foresee what would be the result of such a contest.†

[1] Hard. ii. 439, 441. Jom. iv. 177.

* Such was the dissension between the Austrians and Prussians, that their respective commanders published mutual recriminations against each other, and fought duels in support of their respective sides of the question.—Hard. ii. 442.

† So manifestly were the divisions of the Allies and the defection of the Prussians, the cause of all the disasters of the campaign on the German frontier, that the Duke of Brunswick himself did not hesitate to ascribe them to that cause. On 24th January 1794, he wrote to Prince Louis of Prussia in these terms: "I have been enveloped in circumstances as distressing as they were extraordinary, which have imposed upon me the painful necessity of acting as I have done. What a misfortune that external and internal dissensions should so frequently have paralyzed the movement of the armies, at the very time when the greatest activity was necessary. If after the fall of Mayence they had fallen on Houchard, whom they would have beaten, they would

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Campaign on the Spanish frontier.

The campaign on the Pyrenean frontier during this year, was not characterised by any event of importance. At the first breaking out of the war, in February, the Spanish Government made vigorous exertions to increase their armies, and the zeal and patriotism of the inhabitants soon supplied the deficiencies of the military establishment, and enabled them to put two considerable forces on foot. Two armies were formed: one of thirty thousand men, destined to invade Roussillon; the other of twenty-five thousand, to penetrate by the Bidassoa, on the side of Bayonne.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 396.

April 14.

On the Bidassoa.

The Republican army on the western entrance of the Pyrenees, occupied a line from St Jean Pied de Port to the mouth of the Bidassoa, strengthened by three intrenched camps, while the Spaniards were stationed on the heights of St Marcial, the destined theatre of honourable achievement to their arms in a more glorious war. On the 14th April, the Spaniards, from their position, opened a vigorous fire on the French line, and during the confusion occasioned by it among their opponents, crossed the Bidassoa, and carried a

have prevented the march of troops to the north; and by consequence the checks of Dunkirk and Maubeuge; Sarre Louis, ill provisioned and destitute at that period of any shelter from a bombardment, would have fallen in fifteen days. Alsace thus would have been turned by the Sarre: the capture of the lines of Lautern would have been more solid: and if the Republican army of the Rhine had been by that means separated from that of the Moselle, Landau would infallibly have fallen. I implore you to use your efforts to prevent the undue separation of the army into detachments; when this is the case, weak at every point, it is liable to be cut up in detail. At Mayence the fruits of the whole war were lost; and there is no hope that a third campaign will repair the disasters of the two preceding. The same causes will divide the Allied Powers which have hitherto divided them: the movements of the armies will suffer from them as they have suffered: their march will be embarrassed, retarded, prevented; and the delay in the re-establishment of the Prussian army, unavoidable perhaps from political causes, will become the cause in the succeeding campaign of incalculable disasters."—See Hard. ii. 444, 448.

fort, which was soon after abandoned. This attack was only the prelude to a more decisive one, which took place on the 1st May, when the French were driven from one of their camps, with the loss of fifteen pieces of cannon; and, on the 6th June, they were driven from another camp, and forced into St Pied de Port, with the loss of all the cannon and ammunition which it contained. After these disasters, the Republican commander was indefatigable in his endeavours to restore the courage and discipline of his troops, and deeming them at length sufficiently experienced for offensive operations, he made a general attack, on the 29th August, on the posts which the Spaniards had fortified on the French territory, but was repulsed with considerable loss, and disabled from undertaking any movement of consequence for the remainder of the campaign.[1]

May 1.

June 6.

[1] Jom. iv. 273, 282. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 397, 398.

Operations of more importance took place, during the same campaign, on the eastern side. The Spaniards, under Don Ricardos, in the middle of April, invaded Roussillon, and on the 21st, a small body having gained an advantage over an equal number of French, this was followed soon after by a general attack on the French camp, which ended in the defeat of the Republicans. Soon after the forts of Bellegrade and Villa Franca were taken, and Ricardos, pursuing his advantages, on the 29th August attacked a large body of French at Millas, who were totally defeated, with the loss of fifteen pieces of cannon. The result of this was, that the invaders passed Perpignan, and interrupted the communication between Languedoc and Roussillon.[2]

And Eastern Pyrenees.

April 21.

May 18.

Aug. 29.

[2] Jom. iv. 241, 243. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 399.

But the Convention, alarmed at the rapid progress of the Spaniards, at length took the most vigorous measures to reinforce their armies; and the ener-

Invasion of Roussillon.

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getic government of the Committee of Public Safety restored success to the Republican standards. Two divisions of the French, about fifteen thousand strong, Sept. 17. were directed to move against the Spaniards, under Don Juan Courten, who had not above six thousand men at Peyrestortes, and their attack was combined with so much skill, that the enemy were assailed Their defeat. in front, both flanks, and rear, at the same time. After a gallant defence, the Spaniards were forced to commence a retreat, which, though conducted for some time in good order, at length was converted into a flight, during which they lost one thousand men killed, and fifteen hundred prisoners, besides all their artillery and camp equipage.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 244, 245.

Elated by this success, the Republicans proposed a general attack upon the Spanish army, which took Sept. 22. Battle of Truellas, and Defeat of the French. place at Truellas. Twenty thousand chosen troops, divided into three columns, advanced against the Spanish camp. After an obstinate resistance, that which attacked the centre, under the command of Dagobert, carried the intrenchments, and was on the point of gaining a glorious victory, when Courten, coming up with the Spanish reserve, prolonged the combat, and gave time for Don Ricardos, who had defeated the attack on his left, to advance at the head of four regiments of cavalry, which decided the day. Three French battalions laid down their arms, and the remainder, formed into squares, retreated in spite of the utmost efforts of the Spanish cavalry, not, however, till they had sustained a loss of four thousand men and ten pieces of artillery.[2]

[2] Jom. iv. 246, 248. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 399.

Dagobert was immediately displaced from the supreme command for this disaster: and the Republicans, under Davoust, being shortly after reinforced by fifteen thousand men, levied under the decree of 23d

August, Ricardos was constrained, notwithstanding his success, to remain upon the defensive. He retired, therefore, to a strong intrenched camp near Boulon, where he was attacked on the 3d October by the French forces. From that time to the beginning of December, a variety of actions took place, without any decisive advantage on either side, but without the Spanish troops ever being dislodged from their position. At that period, Ricardos having been strongly reinforced, resolved to resume the offensive. Early on the 7th December, he disposed his troops in four columns, and having surprised the advanced posts, commenced an unexpected attack upon the French lines. The Republicans, many of whom were inexperienced levies, instantly took to flight, and the whole army was routed, with the loss of forty-six pieces of cannon, and two thousand five hundred men. The Spaniards followed up this success by another expedition against the town of Port Vendre, which they carried, with all the artillery mounted on its defences; and soon after, Collioure surrendered to their forces, with above eighty pieces of cannon, while the Marquis Amarillas overthrew the right, and carried such terror into the inexperienced forces of the Republicans, that many battalions disbanded themselves, and fled into the interior, and the whole fell back in confusion under the cannon of Perpignan. By these repeated disasters, the French army was so much discouraged, that almost all the National Guards left their colours, and the General-in-Chief announced to the Convention, that he was only at the head of eight thousand men. Had the Spanish commander been aware of the state of his opponents, he might, by a vigorous attack, have completed their ruin before the reinforcements arrived from Toulon,[1] which, in the be-

Dec. 7.

Dec. 14.

Second Rout of the French, who fall back to Perpignan.

Dec. 20.

[1] Jom. iv. 251, 262, 270, 272. An. Reg. xxxiii. 400.

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ginning of the following month, restored the balance of the contending forces.

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At the conclusion of the preceding campaign, the French remained masters of the territory and city of Nice. An expedition, projected by the Republicans against Sardinia, totally failed. When the season was so far advanced as to permit operations in the Maritime Alps, the Piedmontese army, consisting of thirty thousand natives and ten thousand Austrians, was posted along their summits, with the centre at Saorgio, strongly fortified. In the beginning of June, the Republicans, twenty-five thousand strong, commenced an attack in five columns, but after some partial success, they resumed their positions, and being soon after weakened by detachments for the siege of Toulon, remained on the defensive till the end of July, when they made themselves masters of the Col d'Argentiere and the Col de Sauteron, which excited the utmost alarm in the Court of Turin, and prevented them from sending those succours to the army in Savoy, which the powerful diversion occasioned by the siege of Lyons so evidently recommended.[1]

Campaign in the Maritime Alps. Feb. 14.

[1] Jom. iv. 181, 184. Toul. iv. 216, 217, 218. Th. v. 38.

The insurrection in Lyons offered an opportunity for establishing themselves in the south of France, which could hardly have been hoped for by the Allied Powers. Had sixty thousand regular troops descended from the Alps in Italy, and taken advantage of the effervescence which prevailed in Toulon, Marseilles, and Lyons, the consequences might have been incalculable. But such were the divisions among the Allies, that this golden opportunity, never to recur, was neglected, and the Court of Turin contented themselves, during that unhoped-for diversion, with merely aiming at the expulsion of the French from the valleys of the Arc and the Isere. This was no difficult

Feeble Irruption on the side of Chambérry.

matter, as they were masters of the summits of Mont Cenis and the Little St Bernard, and the French in the valleys beneath, were severely weakened by detachments for the siege of Lyons. In the middle of August, the Sardinian columns descended the ravines of St Jean de Maurienne and Moutiers, under the command of General Gordon, and after some trifling engagements, drove the Republicans from these narrow and winding valleys, and compelled them to take refuge under the cannon of Montmelian. But here terminated the success of their feeble invasion. Kellerman, hearing of the advance of the Sardinians, left the siege of Lyons to General Durnuy, and hastily returning to Chambérry, roused the National Guard to resist the enemy. At the moment that they were preparing to follow up their advantages, the French commander anticipated them by a brisk attack, and, after a feeble resistance, drove them from the whole ground they had gained, as far as the foot of Mont Cenis. Thus a campaign, from which, if boldly conducted, the liberation of all the south-east of France might have been expected, terminated, after an ephemeral success, in ultimate disgrace.[1]

Aug. 15.

Sept. 11.

[1] Jom. iv. 195, 206. Bot. i. 294, 300—309. Th. v. 307, 310.

But while the operations of the Allies in their vicinity were thus inefficient, the efforts of the French themselves were of a more decided and glorious character. The insurrection of 31st May, which subjected the legislature to the mob of Paris, and established the Reign of Terror through all France, excited the utmost indignation in the southern provinces. Marseilles, Toulon, and Lyons, openly espoused the Girondist party; they were warmly attached to freedom, but it was that regulated freedom which provides for the protection of all, not that which subjects the better classes to the despotism of the lower. The discon-

Great Discontent in the South of France.

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tents went on increasing till the middle of July, when Chalier and Riard, the leaders of the Jacobin Club, were put to death. From that moment they were declared in a state of insurrection; and the Girondist leaders, perceiving that the Royalist party had gained the ascendency in the town, withdrew, and Precy was named to the command of the armed force. They immediately began to cast cannon, raise intrenchments, and make every preparation for a vigorous defence.[1]

[1] Th. v. 142, 143. Toul. iv. 55.

Abortive Insurrection at Marseilles.

This discontent first broke into open violence in Marseilles. At the first intelligence, Kellerman despatched General Carteaux to prevent a corps of ten thousand men, from that city, from effecting a junction with the volunteers from Lyons. Had this junction been effected, there can be no doubt that the whole of the South of France would have thrown off the yoke of the Convention. But Carteaux, after overawing Avignon and Pont d'Esprit, encountered the Marseillois corps, first at Salons, and afterwards at Septiemes, where he totally defeated it, and the following day entered Marseilles. Terror instantly resumed its sway; the prisons were emptied; all the leaders of the Girondists thrown into confinement, and the guillotine, ever in the rear of the Republican armies, installed in bloody sovereignty.[2]

[2] Toul. iv. 63, 66. Jom. iv. 208, 209. Th. v. 74.

A large proportion of the citizens of Marseilles fled to Toulon, where they spread the most dismal accounts of the sufferings of their fellow-citizens, and the fate which awaited Toulon, if it fell into the hands of the Republicans. That rising seaport already possessed a population of twenty-five thousand souls, and was warmly opposed to the Revolution, from the suffering which had involved its population ever since its commencement; and the number of officers connected with the aristocracy who had enjoyed situations in the ma-

rine, under the ancient government. In the extremity to which they were reduced, threatened by the near approach of the Republican forces, and destitute of any adequate means of defence, the inhabitants saw no alternative but to open their harbour to the English fleet, which was cruizing in the vicinity, and proclaim Louis XVII. as King, The primary Sections were accordingly convoked, and the proposal was unanimously agreed to; the Dauphin was proclaimed; the English squadrons entered the harbour, and the crews of seven ships of the line, who proved refractory, were allowed to retire, while those of the remainder joined the inhabitants. Shortly afterwards the Spanish squadron arrived, bringing with them a considerable reinforcement of land troops, and the Allied Forces, eight thousand strong, took possession of all the forts in the city. The English Admiral Hood on this occasion, engaged in the most solemn manner, in two different proclamations, to take possession of Toulon, solely and exclusively in the name and for the behoof of Louis XVII., and to restore the fleet to the monarchical government of France on a general peace.*

Revolt at Toulon, which opens its Gates to the English.

[1] Jom. iv. 209, 211. Toul. iv. 67, 68.

* In the first proclamation, Admiral Hood said, "If the people declare openly in favour of a monarchical government, and they resolve to put me in possession of the harbour, they shall receive all the succours which the squadron under my command can afford.—I declare that property and persons shall be held sacred; we wish only to establish peace.—When it is concluded, we shall restore the fleet to France, agreeably to the inventory which shall be made out." In the second he was equally explicit: "Considering that the Sections of Toulon, by the Commissioners whom they have sent to me, have made a solemn declaration in favour of Louis XVII. and a monarchical government, and that they will use their utmost efforts to break the chains which fetter their country, and re-establish the constitution, as it was accepted by their defunct sovereign in 1789: I repeat, by this present declaration, that I take possession of Toulon, and shall keep it solely as a deposit for Louis XVII., and that only till peace is re-established in France, which I trust is not far distant."—Proclama-

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Revolt and Siege of Lyons.

Carteaux immediately ordered a detachment of his forces to march against the insurgents, but the garrison, supported by a body of the National Guards of Toulon, marched to meet them, and the Republicans surprised, were obliged to fall back in confusion. This check proved the necessity of more energetic measures; a large portion of the army of Italy was recalled from the Alps, the National Guards of the neighbouring departments called out, new levies ordered, and the directions of Robespierre immediately acted upon, that Lyons must be burnt and razed to the ground, and then the siege of Toulon formed.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 68.

29th July.

At the first intelligence of the revolt of Lyons, Kellerman assembled eight thousand men, and a small train of artillery, to observe the place. But this was totally insufficient even to maintain its ground before the armed population of the city, which soon amounted to thirty thousand men. A military chest was formed; a paper currency, guaranteed by the principal merchants, issued; cannon in great numbers cast at a foundery within the walls; and fortifications, under the direction of an able engineer, erected upon all the beautiful heights which encircle the city.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 406. Toul. iv. 71.

The troops of the Republicans, though daily increasing, were for long unable to make head against forces so considerable, supported by the ardour of a numerous and enthusiastic population. During the whole of August, accordingly, and the beginning of

tion, 28th August 1793, Hard. ii. 357, 359. These were the true principles of the Anti-revolutionary war: very different from those proclaimed by the Austrians on the taking of Valenciennes and Condé; nor was the subsequent destruction of the fleet, when Toulon was retaken by the Republicans, any departure from good faith in this transaction.—England was bound to restore the fleet to a monarchical government and Louis XVII., but not to hand it over to the Revolutionary government, the most bitter enemy of both.

September, the siege made little progress, and the batteries of the besiegers were scarcely armed. The besieged, meanwhile, made proposals for an accommodation; but the Commissaries of the Convention returned for answer, "Rebels! first show yourselves worthy of pardon, by acknowledging your crime; lay down your arms; deliver up the keys of your city, and deserve the clemency of the Convention, by a sincere repentance." But the inhabitants, well aware of the consequence of such submission, returned for answer, "Conduct so atrocious as yours proves what we have to expect from your clemency; we shall firmly await your arrival; and you will never capture the city but by marching over ruins, and piles of dead."[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 186, 187. Th. v. 310, 311.

Great Efforts of the Republicans for its Reduction.

No sooner were the Convention informed of the entrance of the English into Toulon, than they redoubled in their ardour for the subjugation of Lyons. They indignantly rejected the advice of several of their members, in whose bosom the feelings of humanity were not utterly extinct, for an accommodation with the inhabitants, and took the most energetic measures for the prosecution of the siege. A hundred pieces of cannon, drawn from the arsenals of Besançon and Grenoble, were immediately mounted on the batteries; veteran troops selected from the army on the frontiers of Piedmont, and four corps formed, which on different sides pressed the out-works of the city. In a succession of contests in the outer intrenchments, the Lyonese evinced the most heroic valour; but although the success was frequently balanced, the besiegers upon the whole had the advantage, and the horrors of war, which they had so strenuously endeavoured to keep at a distance, at length fell on this devoted place. On the 24th September, a terrible bombardment and cannonade, with red-hot shot was com-

Bombardment of the City, and Cruelty of the Besiegers.

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menced, which was continued without intermission for a whole week. Night and day the flaming tempest fell on the quarter of St Clair, and speedily involved in conflagration the magnificent hotels of that opulent district, the splendid public buildings which had so long adorned the Place Bellecour, and the beautiful quays of the river. Soon after the arsenal blew up with a terrific explosion. At length the flames reached the great Hospital, one of the noblest monuments of the charity of the past age, now filled with the wounded and the dying, from every quarter of the town; a black flag was hoisted on its summit to avert the fury of the besiegers from that last asylum of humanity, but this only served to redouble their activity, and guide their shot, which were directed with such unerring aim, that after the flames had been two-and-forty times extinguished, it was burnt to the ground.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 187, 189. Toul. iv. 71, 75. Th. v. 306. Lac. xi. 105. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 408.

The ravages of the bombardment, however, increased the sufferings of the inhabitants, without diminishing their means of defence. But soon after, the incessant assaults of the Republicans made them master of the heights of St Croix, which commanded the city from a nearer position; and about the same time, the reinforcements which arrived from the southern departments, now thoroughly roused by the efforts of the Convention, enabled the besiegers to cut off all communication between the inhabitants and the country on which they had hitherto depended for provisions. Before the end of September, fifty thousand men were assembled before the walls; and notwithstanding the most rigid economy in the distribution of food, the pangs of want began to be severely felt. Shortly after,[2] the garrison of Valenciennes arrived, and by their skill in the management of artillery, gave

[2] Lac. xi. 107. Toul. iv. 76. Th. v. 313.

a fatal preponderance to the besieging force, while Couthon came up with twenty-five thousand rude mountaineers from the quarter of Auvergne. CHAP. XIII. 1793.

The hopes of the inhabitants had been chiefly rested on a diversion from the side of Savoy, where the Piedmontese troops were slowly assembling for offensive operations. But these expectations were cruelly disappointed. After a feeble eruption into the valley of St Jean de Maurienne, and some ephemeral success, the Sardinian army was driven back in disgrace over Mount Cenis, having failed in taking advantage of an opportunity more favourable for the establishment of the Royalist party in the south of France than was ever again to recur. This disaster, coupled with the pressure of famine, now severely weakened the spirits of the besieged. Yet, though deserted by all the world, and assailed by a force which at length amounted to above sixty thousand men, the inhabitants nobly and resolutely maintained their defence. In vain the bombardment was continued with unexampled severity, and twenty-seven thousand bombs, five thousand shells, and eleven thousand red-hot shot, thrown into the city; regardless of the iron storm, one-half of the citizens manned the works, while the other half watched the flight of the burning projectiles, and carried water to the quarters where the conflagration broke forth.[1]

Dreadful Sufferings of the Inhabitants.

Sept. 30.

[1] Lac. xi. 104. Bot. i. 247. Th. v. 311.

But these efforts, however glorious, could not finally avert the stroke of fate. The Convention, irritated at the slow progress of the siege, deprived Kellerman of the command, and ordered him to the bar of the Convention to give an account of his conduct, although his talent and energy in repelling the Piedmontese invasion had been the salvation of the Republic. The command of the besieging army was given to General Doppet, who received orders instantly to reduce Lyons

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by fire and sword. To quicken his operations, the savage Couthon, as Commissioner of the Convention, was invested with a despotic authority over the generals, and he instantly resolved to carry Lyons by main force, and employ in the storm the whole sixty thousand men who were employed in the siege.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 191. Toul. iv. 79. Th. v. 313, 314.

Their heroic Efforts.

On the 29th September, a general attack was made by the new commander on the intrenchments of the besieged, the object of which was to force the fortified posts at the point of Perrache, near the confluence of the Saone and the Rhone. After an obstinate resistance, the batteries of St Foix, which commanded that important point, were carried by the Republicans; and the bridge of La Malatierre, which connected it with the opposite bank, was forced. No farther intrenchments remained between the assailants and the city; the last moment of Lyons seemed at hand. But Precy hastened to the scene of danger, at the head of a chosen band of citizens; the assailants were encountered and driven back, with the loss of above two thousand men, from the plain of Perrache, but notwithstanding all their efforts, he could not prevent them from maintaining their ground on the bridge and heights of St Foix.[2]

[2] Jom. iv. 192. Lac. xi.108.

But all these heroic efforts could not arrest the progress of a more fatal enemy within the walls. Famine was consuming the strength of the besieged; for long the women had renounced the use of bread, in order to reserve it for the combatants, but they were soon reduced to half a pound a-day of this humble fare. The remainder of the inhabitants lived on a scanty supply of oats, which was daily served out with the most rigid economy from the public magazine. But even these resources were at length exhausted; in the beginning of October,[3] provisions of every kind had

[3] Lac. xi, 110. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 410. Jom. iv. 192. Th. v. 314, 315.

failed; and the thirty Sections of Lyons, subdued by stern necessity, were compelled to nominate deputies to proceed to the hostile camp.

The brave Precy, however, even in this extremity, disdained to submit. With generous devotion, he resolved to force his way, at the head of a chosen band, through the enemy's lines, and seek in foreign climes that freedom of which France had become unworthy. On the night of the 9th October, the heroic column, consisting of two thousand men, the flower of Lyons, set forth, with their wives and children, and what little property they could save from the ruin of their fortunes. They began in two columns their perilous march, guided by the light of their burning habitations, and the tears amid blessings of those friends who remained behind. Scarcely had they set out, however, when a bomb fell into an ammunition waggon, by the explosion of which great numbers were killed. Notwithstanding this disaster, the head of the column broke the division opposed to it, and forced its way through the lines of the besiegers, but an overwhelming force soon assailed the centre and rear. As they proceeded, they found themselves enveloped on every side; all the heights were lined with cannon, and every house filled with soldiers; an indiscriminate massacre took place, in which men, women, and infants, alike perished; and of the whole who left Lyons, scarcely fifty forced their way with Precy into the Swiss territories.[1]

Precy forces his way through the Besiegers' Lines.

[1] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 410. Lac. xi. 113. Th. v. 315. Jom. iv. 194.

On the following day the Republicans took possession of Lyons. The troops observed strict discipline; they were lodged in barracks, or bivouacked on the Place Bellecour and the Terreaux; the inhabitants indulged a fleeting hope, that a feeling of humanity had at length touched the bosoms of their conquerors.[2]

Town Capitulates.

[2] Jom. iv. 194. Lac. xi. 116.

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They little knew the bitterness of Republican hatred: Lyons was not spared; it was only reserved for cold-blooded vengeance.

No sooner was the town subdued, than Couthon entered at the head of the authorities of the Convention, and instantly reinstated the Jacobin Municipality in full sovereignty, and commissioned them to seek out and denounce the guilty. He wrote to Paris, that the inhabitants consisted of three classes:—1. The guilty rich. 2. The selfish rich. 3. The ignorant workmen, incapable of any wickedness. "The first," he said, "should be guillotined, and their houses destroyed; the fortunes of the second confiscated; and the third removed elsewhere, and their place supplied by a Republican colony."

Sanguinary measures of the Convention to the Inhabitants

"On the ruins of this infamous city," said Barrere in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, when he announced that Lyons was subdued, "shall be raised a monument to the eternal glory of the Convention; and on it shall be engraved the inscription: *Lyons made war on freedom: Lyons is no more.*" The name of the unfortunate city was suppressed by a decree of the Convention; it was termed the "Commune Affranchie." All the inhabitants were appointed to be disarmed, and the whole city destroyed, with the exception only of the poor's house, the manufactories, the great workshops, the hospitals, and public monuments. A commission of five members was appointed to inflict vengeance on the inhabitants; at their head were Couthon and Collot d'Herbois. The former presided over the destruction of the edifices, the latter, over the annihilation of the inhabitants. Attended by a crowd of satellites, Couthon traversed the finest quarters of the city with a silver hammer; he struck at the door of the devoted houses, exclaim-

ing at the same time—"Rebellious house, I strike you in the name of the law!" Instantly the agents of destruction, of whom twenty thousand were in the pay of the Convention, surrounded the dwelling, and levelled it with the ground. The expense of these demolitions, which continued, without interruption, for six months, was greater than it cost to raise the princely Hotel of the Invalids: it amounted to the enormous sum of L. 700,000.[1] The palaces thus destroyed, were the finest private buildings in France, three stories in height, and erected in the richest style of the buildings of Louis XIV.[1]

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[1] Lac. xi. 116, 117. Abbé Guillon, ii. 392, Th. v. 317. 318, 356,

But this vengeance on inanimate stones, was but a prelude to more bloody executions. Collot d'Herbois, the next proconsul, was animated with an envenomed feeling towards the inhabitants; ten years before, he had been hissed off their stage, and the vicissitudes of the Revolution had now placed resistless power in the hands of an indifferent provincial comedian; an emblem of the too frequent tendency of civil convulsions, to elevate whatever is base, and sink whatever is noble among mankind. The discarded actor resolved at leisure to gratify a revenge of ten years' duration; innumerable benefits since conferred on him by the people of Lyons, and no small share of their favour, had not been able to extinguish this ancient grudge. Fouché, (of Nantes,) afterwards so well known as Minister of Police under Napoleon, the worthy associate of Collot d'Herbois, published before his arrival a proclamation, in which he declared, "that the French people could acknowledge no other worship but that of universal morality; no other faith but that of its own sovereignty; that all religious emblems placed on the roads, on the houses, or on public places, should be destroyed;[2] that the mortcloth

Collot d'Herbois' Proceedings.

[2] Moniteur, p. 18. Oct. 1793. Guillon, ii. 333, 337, Lac. xi. 117.

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used at funerals should bear, instead of a religious emblem, a figure of Sleep, and that over the gate of the cemetery should be written—*Death is an eternal sleep.*"

His atrocious cruelty.

Proceeding on these atheistical principles, the first step of Collot d'Herbois and Fouché, was to institute a fête in honour of Chalier, the Republican governor of Lyons, a man of the most execrable character, who had been put to death on the first insurrection, against the rule of the Convention. The churches were next closed, the priests abolished, the decade established, and every vestige of religion extinguished. The bust of Chalier was then carried through the streets, followed by an immense crowd of assassins and prostitutes, exclaiming—" A bas les aristocrates ! Vive la guillotine !" after them came an ass, bearing the gospel, the cross, the communion vases, and all the most sacred emblems of the Christian worship ; the procession came to the Place des Terreaux, where an altar was prepared amidst the ruins of that once splendid square. Fouché then exclaimed—" The blood of the wicked can alone appease thy manes ! We swear before thy sacred image, to avenge thy death ; the blood of the aristocrats shall serve for its incense." At the same time, a fire was lighted on the altar, the crucifix and the gospel were committed to the flames ; the consecrated bread trampled under the feet of the mob, and the ass compelled to drink out of the communion cup the consecrated wine. After this, the procession, singing indecent songs, traversed the streets, followed by an ambulatory guillotine.[1]

[1] Guillon, ii. 346, 348. Lac. xi. 118.

The Revolutionary Tribunal, established under such auspices, was not slow in consummating the work of destruction. " Convinced, as we are," said Collot d'Herbois, " that there is not an innocent soul in the

whole city, but such as was loaded with chains by the enemies of the people, we are steeled against every sentiment of mercy; we are resolved that the blood of the patriots shall be revenged in a manner at once prompt and terrible. The decree of the Convention for the destruction of Lyons has been passed, but hardly any thing has been done for its execution. The work of demolition goes on too slowly; more rapid destruction is required by Republican impatience. The explosion of the mine, or the ravages of fire, can alone express its omnipotence; its will can admit of no control, like the mandates of tyrants; it should resemble the lightning of Heaven."—"We must annihilate at once the enemies of the Republic; that mode of revenging the outraged sovereignty of the people will be infinitely more appalling than the trifling and insufficient work of the guillotine. Often twenty wretches on the same day have undergone punishment, but my impatience is insatiable, till all the conspirators have disappeared; popular vengeance calls for the destruction of our whole enemies at one blow; we are preparing the thunder."[1]

Dreadful Measures of the Revolutionary Tribunal there.

[1] Guillon, ii. 402, 405. Moniteur, 24th Nov. 1793. Th. v. 356.

In pursuance of these principles, orders were given to the Revolutionary Tribunal to redouble their exertions. "We are dying of fatigue," said the judges and the executioner to Collot d'Herbois. "Republicans," replied he, "the amount of your labours is nothing to mine; burn with the same ardour as I for your country, and you will soon recover your strength." But the ferocity of their persecutors was disappointed by the heroism which most of these victims displayed in their last moments. Seated on the fatal chariots, they embraced each other with transports of enthusiasm, exclaiming—

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" Mourir pour la patrie
Est le sort le plus doux,
Le plus digne d'envie."

Many women watched for the hour when their husbands were to pass to execution, precipitated themselves upon the chariot, locked them in their arms, and voluntarily suffered death by their side. Daughters surrendered their honour to save their parents' lives, but the monsters who violated them, adding treachery to crime, led them out to behold the execution of the objects for whom they had submitted to sacrifices worse than death itself.[1]

[1] Guillon, ii. 416. Lac. xi. 118, 119.

Mitrillade of the Prisoners.

Deeming the daily execution of fifteen or twenty such persons too tardy a display of Republican vengeance, Collot d'Herbois prepared a new and simultaneous mode of punishment. Sixty captives, of both sexes, were led out together, tightly bound in a file, to the Place du Brotteaux; they were arranged in two files, with a deep ditch on each side, which was to be their place of sepulture, while Gendarmes, with uplifted sabres, threatened with instant death whoever moved from the position in which they stood. At the extremity of the file, two cannon loaded with grape were so placed as to enfilade the whole. The wretched victims beheld with firmness the awful preparations, and continued singing the patriotic hymns of the Lyonese, till the signal was given, and the guns were discharged. Few were so fortunate as to obtain death at the first fire, the greater part were merely mutilated, and fell uttering piercing cries, and beseeching the soldiers to put a period to their sufferings. Broken limbs, torn off by the shot, were scattered in every direction, while the blood flowed in torrents into the ditches on either side of the line.[2] A second and a third discharge were insufficient to complete the work of

[2] Guillon, ii. 417. Lac. xi. 121.

destruction, till at length the Gendarmerie, unable to witness such protracted sufferings, rushed in and despatched the survivors with their sabres. The bodies were collected, and thrown into the Rhone.

Vast Numbers who there perished.

On the following day, this bloody scene was renewed on a still greater scale. Two hundred and nine captives, drawn from the prisons of Roanne, were brought before the Revolutionary Judges, at the Hotel de Ville, and, after merely interrogating them as to their names and professions, the lieutenant of the Gendarmerie read a sentence, condemning them all to be executed together. In vain several exclaimed that they had been mistaken for others, that they were not the persons condemned. With such precipitance was the affair conducted, that two commissaries of the prison were led out along with their captives; their cries, their reclamations were alike disregarded. In passing the bridge Morand, the error was discovered, upon the prisoners being counted; it was intimated to Collet d'Herbois, that there were two too many. "What signifies it," said he, "that there are two too many; if they die to-day, they cannot die to-morrow." The whole were brought to the place of execution, a meadow near the granary of Part Dieu, where they were attached to one cord, made fast to trees at stated intervals, with their hands tied behind their backs, and numerous pickets of soldiers disposed so as by one discharge to destroy them all. At a signal given, the fusillade commenced; but few were killed; the greater part had only a jaw or a limb broken, and uttering the most piercing cries, broke loose in their agony from the rope, and were cut down by the gendarmerie in endeavouring to escape.[1] The great numbers who survived the discharge, rendered the work of destruction a most laborious operation, and several were still

[1] Guillon, ii. 427. Lac. xi. 121.

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breathing on the following day, when their bodies were mingled with quick-lime, and cast into a common grave. Collot d'Herbois and Fouché were witnesses of this butchery from a distance, by means of telescopes which they directed to the spot.

All the other fusillades, of which there were several, were conducted in the same manner. One of them was executed under the windows of a hotel on the Quay, where Fouché, with thirty Jacobins and twenty courtesans were engaged at dinner; they rose from table to enjoy the spectacle. The bodies of the slain were floated in such numbers down the Rhone, that the waters were poisoned, and the danger of contagion at length obliged Collot d'Herbois to commit them to the earth. During the course of five months, upwards of six thousand persons suffered death by the hands of the executioners, and more than double that number were driven into exile. Among those who perished on the scaffold, were all the noblest and most virtuous characters of Lyons, all who were distinguished either for generosity, talent, or accomplishment. The engineer, Morand, who had recently constructed the celebrated bridge over the Rhone, which bore his name, was among the first to suffer, and he was succeeded by a generous merchant, whose only crime consisted in having declared that he would give 500,000 francs to rebuild the Hotel Dieu, the noblest monument of charity in Lyons.[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 121, 122. Guillon, ii. 317, 427.

These dreadful atrocities excited no feeling of indignation in the Convention. With disgraceful animosity, they were envious of any city which promised to interfere with the despotism of the Parisian populace, and were secretly rejoiced at an excuse for destroying the wealth, spirit, and intelligence which had sprung up with the commercial prosperity of

Lyons. "The arts and commerce," said Hebert, "are the greatest enemies of freedom. Paris should be the centre of political authority, no community should be suffered to exist which can pretend to rival the capital. Barrere announced the executions to the Convention in the following words:—"The corpses of the rebellious Lyonese floated down the Rhone, will teach the perfidious citizens of Toulon the fate which awaits them."[1] CHAP. XIII. 1793. [1] Lac. xi. 121. Guillon, ii. 307, 308.

The troops engaged in the siege of Lyons were immediately moved towards that unhappy city; twelve battalions of the army of Italy were destined to the same service, and soon forty thousand men were assembled under its walls. It presented, nevertheless, great difficulties to be overcome.[2] [2] Toul. iv. 81.

On the land side Toulon is backed by a ridge of lofty hills, on which, for above a century past, fortifications had been erected. Though formidable to the attacking force, however, these fortified posts were not less dangerous to the besieged, if once they fell into the hands of the enemy, for the greater part of the city and harbour could be reached by their guns. The mountain of Faron and the Hauteur de Grasse are the principal points of this rocky range; on their possession depends the maintenance of the place.[3] Siege of Toulon. [3] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415. Toul. iv. 81.

Shortly after their disembarkation, the English made themselves masters of the defile of Ollioulles, a rocky pass of great strength, well known to travellers for its savage character, which forms the sole communication between the promontory of Toulon and the mainland of France. An English detachment of six hundred men had driven the Republican posts from this important point; but the defence having been unwisely intrusted to a Spanish force, Cartaux assailed it in the beginning of September, with above five Aug. 29.

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thousand men, and after a slight resistance, regained the pass. Its occupation being deemed too great a division of the garrison of the town, already much weakened by the defence of the numerous fortified posts in the vicinity of the harbour, no attempt was made to regain the lost ground, and the Republican videttes were pushed up to the external works of Toulon. As a recompense for this important service, Cartaux was deprived of his command by the Convention, and Dugommier invested with the direction of the besieging force.[1]

1 Toul. iv. 81. Jom. iv. 215. Th. vi. 51.

Allies assemble for its defence.

Every exertion was made by the Allied troops, and the inhabitants of Toulon, during the respite afforded by the siege of Lyons, to strengthen the defences of the town, but the regular force was too small, and composed of too heterogeneous materials, to inspire any well-grounded confidence in their means of resistance. The English troops did not exceed five thousand men, and little reliance could be placed on the motley crowd of eight thousand Spanish, Piedmontese, and Neapolitan soldiers, who composed the remainder of the garrison. The hopes of the inhabitants were principally rested on powerful reinforcements from England and Austria; but their expectations from both these powers were miserably disappointed. They made the utmost efforts, however, to strengthen the defence of the place, and in especial endeavoured to render impregnable the Fort Eguillette, placed at the extremity of the promontory which shuts in the lesser harbour, and which, from its similarity to the position of the great fortress of the same name, they called the Little Gibraltar.[2]

2 Th. vi. 52. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415.

In the beginning of September Lord Mulgrave arrived, and assumed the command of the whole garrison, and the most active operations were immediate-

ly commenced for strengthening the outworks on the mountain range behind the city.[1] The heights of Malbousquet, of Cape Brun, and of l'Eguillette, were soon covered with works traced out by the French engineers.

[1] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415.

No sooner had General Dugommier taken the command, and the whole besieging army assembled, than it was resolved to commence an attack on the hill forts which covered the harbour; and for this purpose, while a false attack was directed against Cape Brun, the principal effort was to be made for the possession of the mountain of Faron, and the Fort Malbousquet. With this view the breaching batteries were placed under the direction of a young officer of artillery, then chief of battalion, destined to outstrip all his predecessors in European history, Napoleon Buonaparte. Under his able superintendence, the works of the fort soon began to be seriously damaged; and to interrupt the operation, a sally was resolved upon from the garrison.[2]

[2] Jom. iv. 219, 220.

Progress of the Siege. Nov. 30.

On the 30th November the sally was made by three thousand men from the town, to destroy the works on the heights of Arrennes, from which this annoyance was expected; while another column, of nearly the same strength, proceeding in the opposite direction, was destined to force the batteries at the gorge of Ollioulles, and destroy the great park placed there. Both attacks were at first crowned with complete success; the batteries were carried, and the park on the point of being taken, when Dugommier, after haranguing the troops, led them back to the charge, and succeeded in repulsing the assailants. On the side of Arrennes, the sally was equally fortunate, all the enemy's works were carried, and their guns spiked; but the impetuosity of the detachment having led them too far in

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pursuit of the enemy, they were, in their turn, attacked by fresh troops, headed by Napoleon, and driven back to the city with considerable loss. In this affair General O'Hara, who had recently arrived from England, was wounded, and Dugommier was twice struck with spent balls, though without experiencing any serious injury.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1793, 414. Jom. iv. 220. Toul. iv. 85. Th. vi. 55. 56. Nap. i. 13. 15.

The whole force of the besiegers was now directed against the English redoubt, erected in the centre of the works on the neck of land called Eguillette, and regarded as the key of the defence on that quarter. After battering the forts for a considerable time, the fire of the besiegers became quite incessant for the whole of the 16th of December; and at two o'clock on the morning of the 17th, the Republicans advanced to the assault. They were received with a tremendous fire of grape and musketry from the works, and soon the ditch was filled with the dead and the dying. The column was driven back, and Dugommier, who headed it, gave all over for lost; but fresh troops continually advancing, with great intrepidity, at length overpowered the Spanish soldiers, to whom a part of the line was intrusted, and surrounded the British detachment, nearly three hundred of whom fell while gallantly defending their part of the intrenchments. The possession of this fort by the enemy rendered the farther maintenance of the exterior defences impracticable; and in the night, the whole Allied troops were withdrawn from the promontory to the city of Toulon.[2] Napoleon had strongly recommended this measure, as the possession of this fort, which commanded the inner harbour, would render the situation of the fleet extremely perilous, and in all probability lead to the evacuation of the city.

Dec. 17.

[2] Jom. iv. 223. Toul. iv. 87. Ann. Reg. 1793, 415. Th. vi. 56, 57. Nap. i. 14, 22, 23.

While this important success was gained on the

side of Fort Eguillette, the Republicans were not less fortunate on the other extremity of the line. A little before daybreak, and shortly after the firing had ceased on the promontory, a general attack was made by the enemy on the whole extensive range of posts which crowned the mountain of Faron. On the eastern side the Republicans were repulsed; but on the north, where the mountain was nearly eighteen hundred feet in height, steep, rocky, and apparently inaccessible, they succeeded in making good their ascent through paths deemed impracticable. Hardly were the Allies beginning to congratulate themselves on the defeat of what they deemed the main attack, when they beheld the heights above them crowded with glittering battalions, and the tricolor flag displayed from the loftiest summit of the mountain.[1]

Decisive measures of Napoleon. Storming of the exterior forts.

[1] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415. Jom. iv. 223. Toul. iv. 88.

These conquests, which were projected by the genius of Napoleon, were decisive of the fate of the place. The garrison, it is true, still consisted of above ten thousand men, and the works of the town itself were as yet uninjured; but the harbour was untenable, as the shot from the heights of Faron and Fort Eguillette ranged over its whole extent. Sir Samuel Hood, alone, warmly insisted upon the propriety of an immediate effort to regain the outworks which had been lost; his advice was overruled by all the other officers, and it was resolved to evacuate the place.[2]

[2] Nap. i. 14. Ann. Reg. 1793, 415.

Measures were immediately taken to carry this determination into effect. The exterior forts, which still remained in the hands of the Allies, were all abandoned, and information conveyed to the principal inhabitants, that the means of retreat would be afforded them on board the British squadron, while the fleet was moved to the outer roads beyond the reach of the enemy's fire. But much confusion necessarily ensued

Evacuation of the place.

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with a garrison composed of so many different nations, and the Neapolitans, in particular, fled from their posts, and got on board their ships with so much precipitation, that they incurred the derision of the whole garrison.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. p. 416, 417. Jom. iv. 224. Th. vi. 57. Toul. iv. 88. James, i. 110, 115.

But very different were the feelings with which the unfortunate inhabitants regarded this hasty evacuation of their city. To them it was the harbinger of confiscation, exile, and death, Republican conquest, and the reign of the guillotine. With anxious eyes they watched the embarkation of the British sick and wounded on the morning of the 18th, and when the fatal truth could no longer be concealed that they were about to be abandoned, despair and anguish wrung every heart. The streets were soon in the most frightful state of confusion; in many, the Jacobins were already firing on the flying groups of women and children who were hurrying to the quay; and the sides of the harbour were soon filled with a piteous crowd, entreating, in the name of every thing that was sacred, to be saved from their implacable enemies. No time was lost in taking the unfortunate fugitives on board the vessels appointed for that purpose; an operation of no small labour and difficulty, for their numbers exceeded fourteen thousand.[2]

Despair of the Inhabitants.

[2] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. p. 416, 418. James's Naval Hist. i. 115. Th. vi. 59.

It was resolved in the council, that such part of the French fleet as could be got ready for sea, should be sent out under the Royalist Admiral Trogoffe, and that the remainder, with all the stores, should be destroyed. This was a service of great danger, for the Republicans were fast pressing on the retreating forces of the besieged, and their shot already began to plunge into the harbour. Sir Sidney Smith volunteered to conduct the perilous enterprise, and at midnight proceeded to the arsenal to commence the work

Burning of the Arsenal and Fleet.

of destruction. He found the galley-slaves, to the number of six hundred, the greater part of whom were unfettered, disposed to dispute his entrance into the dock-yard, but by disposing a British sloop so that its guns enfiladed the quay, he was able to overawe them, and at the same time restrain the Jacobins, who, in great numbers, and with loud shouts, were assembling round its outer palisades. At eight, a fireship was towed into the harbour, and at ten the torch was applied, and the flames arose in every quarter. Notwithstanding the calmness of the night, the fire spread with rapidity, and soon reached the fleet, where, in a short time, fifteen ships of the line, and eight frigates, were consumed or burnt to the water's edge. The volumes of smoke which filled the sky, the flames which burst, as it were, out of the sea, and ascended to the heavens, the red light which illuminated even the most distant mountains, formed, says Napoleon, a sublime and unique spectacle.[1] About midnight, the Iris frigate, with several thousand barrels of powder, blew up with a terrific explosion, and shortly after the Montreal, fireship, experienced the same fate. The burning embers falling in every direction, and the awful violence of the shocks, quelled for a moment the shouts of the Republican soldiers, who now crowded to the harbour's edge, and beheld, with indignant fury, the resistless progress of the conflagration.[2]

[1] Nap. i. 25.

[2] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 418. Jom. iv. 226. James, i. 117. Th. vi. 58, 59. Nap. i. 25, 26.

Horrors of the Evacuation.

No words can do justice to the horrors of the scene which ensued, when the last columns of the Allied troops commenced their embarkation. Cries, screams, and lamentations, were heard in every quarter; the frantic clamour, heard even across the harbour, announced to the soldiers in the Republican camp that the last hope of the Royalists was giving way. The sad remnant of those who had favoured the Royal

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cause, and who had neglected to go off in the first embarkation, came flying to the beach, and invoked, with tears and prayers, the aid of their British friends. Mothers, clasping their babes to their bosoms, helpless children and decrepid old men, might be seen stretching their hands towards the harbour, shuddering at every sound behind them, and even rushing into the waves to escape the less merciful death which awaited them from their countrymen. Such as could seize upon boats rushed into them with frantic vehemence, pushed from the beach without oars, and directed their unsteady and dangerous course towards their former protectors. Sir Sidney Smith, with a degree of humanity worthy of his high character, instantly suspended his retreat till not a single individual who claimed his assistance remained on the strand, though the total number borne away amounted to fourteen thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven.[1]

[1] Joubert's Memoirs, p. 75. Jom. ii. 226. Ann. Reg. 1703, 418. Fonveille, 84, 87, 112.

The lukewarmness or timidity of the Spanish officers, to whom the destruction of the vessels in the basin before the town had been intrusted, preserved them from destruction, and saved a remnant, consisting of seven ships of the line and eleven frigates, to the Republic. These, with five ships of the line, sent round to Rochefort at the commencement of the siege, were all that remained of thirty-one ships of the line, and twenty-five frigates, which were lying in Toulon at the time it fell into the hands of the Allies. Three ships of the line, and three frigates, were brought away untouched, and taken into the English service; the total number taken, or destroyed, was eighteen ships of the line, nine frigates, and eleven corvettes.[2] The French soldiers beheld, with indescribable anguish, the destruction of their fleet; all thinking men then

[2] Jom. iv. 225. 226. James, i. 117. Th. vi. 60. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 420.

foresaw that the war now lighted up between the rival states, could not be extinguished but by the destruction of one of them.

The storm which now burst on the heads of the unfortunate Toulonese, was truly dreadful. The infuriated soldiers rushed into the town, and, in their rage, massacred two hundred Jacobins, who had come out to welcome their approach. For twenty-four hours, the wretched inhabitants were a prey to the brutality of the soldiers, and of the galley slaves, who were let loose upon the city; and a stop was only put to these horrors by the citizens redeeming themselves for the enormous sum of 4,000,000 francs, or L.176,000. To the honour of Dugommier, it must be added, that he did his utmost, both to check the violence of his soldiers, and mitigate the severity of the Convention towards the captives. Several thousand citizens, of every age and sex, perished in a few weeks, by the sword or the guillotine; two hundred were daily beheaded for a considerable time, and twelve thousand labourers were hired from the surrounding departments, to demolish the buildings of the city.[1]

Dreadful Cruelty of the Republicans.

[1] Jom. iv. 226. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 421. James, i. 116, 117. Revolution, iii. 336.

But nothing could soften the hearts of that inexorable body. On the motion of Barrere, it was decreed that the name of Toulon should be changed to that of Port de la Montagne, that the houses should be rased to the foundations, and nothing left but the naval and military establishments. Barras, Freron, and Robespierre the younger, were chosen to execute the vengeance of the Convention on the fallen city. Military Commissions were immediately formed, the prisons filled, a Revolutionary Tribunal established, and the guillotine put in permanent activity. The inhuman mitrillades of Lyons were imitated with fearful effect; before many weeks had expired, eight hundred per-

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sons had been thus cut off; a prodigious proportion out of a population not now exceeding ten thousand souls. One of the victims was an old merchant, of the name of Hughes; eighty-four years of age, deaf, and almost blind. His only crime was the possession of a fortune of L. 800,000. He offered all his wealth but 500,000 livres to save his life; the judge, deeming that offer inadequate, sent him to the scaffold, and confiscated the whole. "When I beheld this old man executed," said Napoleon, "I felt as if the end of the world was at hand."[1] Among those struck down in one of the fusillades, was an old man, severely, but not mortally wounded. The executioners conceiving him dead, retired from the scene of carnage; the persons who succeeded them to strip the dead, passed him by, through accident, in the darkness of the night, and he had strength enough left to raise himself from the ground, and move from the spot. His foot struck against a body, which gave a groan, and, stooping down, he discovered that it was his own son! After the first transports of joy were over, they crept along the ground, and favoured by the darkness of the night, and the inebriety of the guards, they had the good fortune to escape, and lived to recount a tale which would have passed for fiction, if experience had not proved, in innumerable instances, that the horrors and vicissitudes of a Revolution exceed any thing which the imagination of romance could have conceived.[2]

[1] Las Casas, i. 166.

[2] Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 421. Lac. xi. 189.

General Reflections on the Campaign.

Thus terminated this memorable campaign, the most remarkable in the annals of France, perhaps in the history of the world. From a state of unexampled peril, from the attack of forces which would have crushed Louis XIV., in the plenitude of his power, from civil dissensions which threatened to dismember

the state, the Republic emerged triumphant. A revolt, apparently destined to sever the opulent cities of the South from its dominions; a civil war, which consumed the vitals of the Western provinces; an invasion, which had broken through the iron barrier of the Northern, and shaken the strength of the Eastern frontier, were all defeated. The discomfited English had retired from Toulon, the Prussians, in confusion, had recrossed the Rhine, the tide of conquest was rolled back in the North, and the valour of the Vendéans irretrievably arrested.

For these immense advantages, the Convention were indebted to the energy of their measures, the ability of their councils, and the enthusiasm of their subjects. In the convulsion of society, not only wickedness, but talent had risen to the head of affairs; if history has nothing to show comparable to the crimes which were committed, it has few similar instances of undaunted resolution to commemorate. Impartial justice requires that this praise should be bestowed upon the Committee of Public Safety; if the cruelty of their internal administration exceeded the worst despotism of the emperors, the dignity of their external conduct rivalled the noblest instances of Roman heroism.

In talent, it was evident that the Republicans had now acquired a decided preponderance over their opponents. This was the natural consequence of the concentration of all the ability of France in the military service, and the opening which was afforded to merit in every rank, to aspire to the highest situations. Drawn from the fertile mines of the middling classes, the talent which now emerged in every department, from the general to the sentinel, formed the basis of a more intelligent army than had ever been formed in modern Europe, while the inexhausted sup-

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plies of men which the conscription afforded, raised it to a numerical amount, beyond any thing hitherto known in the world.

After having authorized a levy of 300,000 men in spring, the Convention, in the beginning of August, ordered a levy of 1,200,000 more. These immense armaments, which, in ordinary times, could never have been attempted by a regular government, were successively brought into the field during the fervour of a Revolution, through the exaltation of spirit which it had produced, and the universal misery which it had engendered. The destruction of commerce, and the closing of all pacific employment, augmented those formidable bands, which issued as from a fiery volcano, to devastate the surrounding states; and from the annihilation of all the known sources of credit, the government derived unparalleled financial resources.

As this was a new element, then for the first time introduced into political contests, so all the established governments of Europe were mistaken in the means of resisting it. They were not aware of the magnitude of the power which was thus roused into action, and hoped to crush it by the same moderate efforts which had been found successful in former wars. While France, accordingly, strained every nerve to recruit its armies, they contented themselves with maintaining their contingents at their former numerical amount; and were astonished when the armies calculated to match 300,000 soldiers, failed in subduing a million. Hence the rapid series of successes, which, in every quarter, before the end of the year, signalized the Republican arms; and the explanation of the fact, that the Allied Forces, which, in the commencement, were everywhere superior, before the close of the campaign, were on all sides inferior to their opponents.

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But most of all did England experience, in this campaign, the bitter consequence of the imprudent reduction of military force which had followed the close of the American war. With an army at first not exceeding thirty thousand men, what could be achieved against France in the energy of a Revolution? Yet what fair opportunities, never again to recur, were then afforded to crush the hydra in its cradle? If thirty thousand British troops had been added to the Duke of York's army at the siege of Dunkirk, that important fortress would speedily have fallen, and the advance of the Allied Army palsied all the efforts of the Convention; if the same force had aided the insurgents of La Vendée, the white flag would have been advanced to the Tuileries; if it had been sent to Toulon, the Constitutional throne would have been at once established in all the south of France. What countless sums, what gigantic efforts were required to regain the ground then lost! The affairs of Napoleon, in spring 1814, were not so hopeless as those of the Republic would have been, if such an addition could have been made at that critical moment to the British invading force.

This ruinous system of reducing the forces of the country upon the conclusion of hostilities, is the cause of almost all the discomfitures which tarnish the reputation, and of more than half the debt which now curbs the energies, of Britain. The cause, incident to a free constitution, has been well explained by Dean Tucker. "The patriot and furious anti-courtier always begins with schemes of frugality, and is a zealous supporter of measures of economy. He loudly exclaims against even a small Parliamentary army, both on account of its danger and expense. By persevering in these laudable endeavours, he prevents

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such a number of forces by land and sea from being kept up as are necessary for the common safety of the kingdom. The consequence is, when a war breaks out, new levies are half-formed, and half-disciplined, squadrons at sea are half-manned, and the officers mere novices in their business. Ignorance, unskilfulness, and confusion, are unavoidable for a time, the necessary result of which is some defeat received, some stain or dishonour cast upon the arms of Britain. Thus the nation is involved in expenses ten times as great, and made to raise forces twenty times as numerous, as were complained of before; till peace is made, and schemes of ruinous economy are again called for by a new set of patriots. Thus the patriotic farce goes round, ending in real tragedy to the nation and mankind."[1] It seems hopeless to expect, that this popular cry for costly economy will ever cease in pacific periods, because, even with the recent proof of its ruinous effect, at the commencement of the Revolutionary war, we have seen it so fiercely raised for the reduction of the noble force which brought it to a glorious termination. It seems the melancholy fate of each successive generation to be instructed by its own, and never by its predecessors' errors; and perhaps it is a law of nature, that such causes should, at stated periods, prostrate the strength of free states, and prevent that progressive growth of their power, which might otherwise sink the emulation of independent kingdoms in the slumber of universal dominion.

[1] Tucker's Essays, i. 72.

CHAPTER XIV.

REIGN OF TERROR—FROM THE DEATH OF DANTON TO THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE.

ARGUMENT.

Origin of the Atrocities of the Reign of Terror—It springs from sacrificing Justice to supposed Expedience—Principles of Robespierre's Government after the Fall of Danton—Political Fanaticism of the period—Character of St Just and Couthon—Their prodigious Energy—Great accumulation of prisoners at Paris, and throughout France—Pretended Conspiracy in the Prisons—Picture of the Prisons during this period—Dreadful system of Espionage in Paris, and the other Towns of France—Convention meanwhile is occupied with the Civic Virtues—Unsuccessful attempt to Assassinate Robespierre—Fête in honour of the Supreme Being—Additional Powers conferred on the Revolutionary Tribunal—Debate on it in the Assembly—But it is nevertheless carried—Rapid increase of the Proscriptions—Means by which the support of the people was secured—Cruelties in the Provinces—Lebon at Arras—Carrier at Nantes—General apathy of the Class of Proprietors—Execution of Malesherbes and his Family—Of Madame Elizabeth—Of Custine's Son, Marshal Luckner, Biron Lamartiliere, and Dietrich—Agony of the Prisoners—Death of the Princess of Monaco, Lavoisier, Roucher, and others—Horror at length excited by the frequency and descent in Society of the executions—Advantage first taken of the Superstition of Robespierre—Suspicions of Robespierre awakened—Henriot and St Just recommend vigorous Measures—Insurrection agreed on at the Jacobins'—Measures of the Convention to resist it—The Contest begins in the Assembly—Robespierre's Speech—Cambon's Reply—Extraordinary Meeting of the Jacobins—Mutual preparations during the Night—Meeting of the Convention on the 9th Thermidor—Vehement Eloquence of Tallien—Consternation of Robespierre—Robespierre, Couthon, St Just, and Henriot, ordered to be Arrested—Robespierre is Imprisoned, but Liberated by the People—Firmness of Tallien and his Party—The cannoneers desert Henriot in the Place Carousel—Dreadful Agitation at Paris—The Sections join the Convention—Preparations at the Hotel de Ville—The Cannoneers desert Robespierre, who is Arrested—Dreadful Scene at his Seizure—Executed with St Just, Henriot, Couthon, and their Party—Reflections on the Reign of Terror, with the prodigious Number of its Victims.

"OMNIA mala exempla," says Sallust, "*bonis initiis* orta sunt."—"E l'ordine di questi accidenti," says Machiavel, "è che mentre che gli uomini cercano di

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non temere, cominciano a fare temere altrui, et quella injuria che gli scacciano di loro, la pongono sopra un altro, come se fusse necessario, offendere o esser offeso."[1]*

[1] Discorsé, 46.

"You are quite wrong," said Napoleon to Talma, in the representation of Nero; "you should conceal the tyrant; no man admits his wickedness either to others or himself. You and I speak history, but we speak it like other men."[2] The words which Sallust puts into the mouth of Cæsar, and Napoleon addressed to the actor of Nero, point to the same, and one of the most important principles of human nature. When vice appears in its native deformity, it is universally shunned, its features are horrible alike to others and itself.† It is by borrowing the language, and rousing the passions of virtue, that it insinuates itself into the minds not only of the spectators, but the actors; the worst deeds are committed by men who delude themselves and others by the noblest expressions. Tyranny speaks with the voice of prudence, and points to the dangers of popular insurrection; ambition strikes on the chords of patriotism and loyalty, and leads men to ruin others, in the belief that they are saving themselves; democratic fury appeals to the spirit of freedom, and massacres thousands in the name of insurgent humanity. In all these cases men would shrink with horror from themselves, if their conduct

[2] Napoleon, ii. p. 274.

* All bad actions," says Sallust, "spring from good beginnings:" —"And the progress of these events," says Machiavel, "is this, that in their efforts to avoid fear, men inspire it in others, and that injury which they seek to ward off themselves, they throw upon their neighbours, so that it seems inevitable either to give or receive offence."

† Vice is a monster of such hideous mein,
That to be hated needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with his face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

appeared in its true colours; they become steeped in crime, while yet professing the intentions of virtue, and before they are well aware that they have transgressed its bounds.

Origin of the Atrocities of the Reign of Terror.

All these atrocities proceed from one source; criminality in them all begins when one line is passed. This source is the principle of expedience, this line is the line of justice. "To do evil that good may come of it," is not the least prolific cause of wickedness. It is absolutely necessary, say the politicians of one age, to check the growing spirit of heresy; discord in this world, damnation in the next, follow in its steps; religion, the fountain of peace, is in danger of being polluted by its poison; the transient suffering of a few individuals will ensure the eternal salvation of millions. Such is the language of religious intolerance, such the principles which lighted the fires of Smithfield. How cruel soever it may appear, say the statesmen of another, to sacrifice life for property, it is indispensable in an age of commercial industry; the temptations to fraud are so great, the facilities of commission so extensive, that but for the terror of death, property would be insecure, and industry with all its blessings nipt in the bud. Such is the language of commercial jealousy, of that sanguinary code which the humanity and extended wisdom of England is only beginning to relax. You would not hesitate, say the leaders of another period, to sacrifice a hundred thousand men in a single campaign, to preserve a province, or conquer a frontier town; but what are the wars of princes, to the eternal contest between freedom and tyranny; and what the destruction of its present enemies, to the liberty of unborn millions of the human race? Such is the language of revolutionary cruelty; these the maxims which, beginning

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with the enthusiasm of philanthropists, ended in the rule of Robespierre. Their unexampled atrocities arose from the influence yielded to a single principle; the greatest crimes which the world has ever known, were but an extension of the supposed expedience which hangs for forgery, and burns for heresy.

It springs from sacrificing Justice to supposed Expedience.

The error in all these cases is the same, and consists in supposing that what is unjust ever can be ultimately expedient, or that the Author of Nature would have implanted feelings in the human heart which the interests of society require to be continually violated. "A little knowledge," says Lord Bacon, "makes men irreligious, but extended wisdom brings them back to devotion;" with equal truth it may be said, "That a little experience makes governments and people iniquitous, but extended information brings them back to the principles of justice." The real interests of society, it is at last perceived, can only be secured by those measures which command universal concurrence, and none can finally do this but such as are founded on the original feelings of our nature. It is by attending only to the *first effect* of unjust measures, that men are ever deceived on this subject; when their ultimate consequences come to be appreciated, the expedience is found all to lie on the other side. When the feelings of the great body of mankind are outraged by the measures of government, a reaction invariably follows, and the temporary advantages of injustice are more than counterbalanced by the permanent dissatisfaction which it occasions. The surest guide, it is at length discovered, is to be found in the inward monitor which nature has implanted in every human heart; and statesmen are taught, by experience, that true wisdom consists in following what their conscience tells them to be just, in preference to

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what their limited expérience, or mistaken views, may apprehend to be expedient.

The truth of these principles was strongly exemplified in the later stages of the French Revolution. During the four months which elapsed between the death of Danton and the fall of Robespierre, DEATH became the sole engine of government; systematic and daily executions took place in the capital; extermination, conducted by despotic agents, prevailed in the provinces, and yet nothing but the language of philanthropy was breathed in the Convention, nothing but the noblest sentiments were uttered by the Decemvirs. Each defeat of their rivals only rendered the ruling faction more sanguinary; the successive proscriptions of the Royalists, of the Girondists, of the Constitutionalists, and of the Anarchists, were immediately followed by a more violent effusion of human blood. The destinies of France, as of every other country which undergoes the crisis of a Revolution, had fallen into the hands of men, who, born of the public convulsions, were sustained by them alone; they massacred in the name of their principles, they massacred in the name of the public welfare; but terror of their rivals was the real spring of their actions. The noblest and most sacred motives which can influence the human breast, virtue, humanity, the public good, the freedom of the world, were incessantly invoked, to justify their executions, to prolong a power founded on the agony of the people.[1]

Principles of Robespierre's Government, after the fall of Danton.

[1] Mig ii. 316. Th. vi. 223.

The death of Danton was followed by immediate and unqualified submission from every part of France. Legendre himself, his old friend, said at the Jacobin Club,—"I am bound to declare before the people, that I am fully convinced, by the documents I have inspected, of Danton's guilt. Before his accusation I was his

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intimate friend; I would have answered for his patriotism with my head; but his conduct and that of his accomplices at their trial leave no doubt of their intentions." The same sentiments were re-echoed from every part of France. From all the departments arrived a crowd of addresses, congratulating the Committee of Public Safety and the Convention on their energy. Every one hastened to make his submission to the government, and to admit the justice of its proceedings. But while approbation was in every mouth, submission in every countenance, terror in every heart, hatred at the oppressors was secretly spreading, and the downfall of democratic tyranny preparing amidst the acclamations of its triumph.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 223. 225.

Political Fanaticism of the Period.

The political fanaticism of that extraordinary period exceeded the religious fervour of the age of Cromwell. Posterity will find it as difficult to credit the one as the other. "Plus le corps social transpire," said Collot d'Herbois, "plus il devient sain."—"Il n'y a que les morts qui ne revient pas," said Barrere. "Le Vaisseau de la Revolution, ne peut arriver au port que sur une mer rougie de flots de sang," said St Just. "Une nation ne se régénére que sur des monceaux des cadavres," rejoined Robespierre. Such were the principles daily carried into practice for months together in every town in France.[2] Alone and unresisted, the Committee of Public Safety struck repeated and resistless blows from one end of the kingdom to the other. Fertile in crime, abounding in wretchedness, that eventful reign was not awanting in the most heroic examples of virtue. "Non tamen adeo Virtutum sterile seculum, ut non et bona exempla prodiderit. Comitatae liberos profugos matres, secutae maritos in exilia conjuges, propinqui ardentes, constantes generi,[3] contumax etiam adversus tormenta servorum

[2] Mig. ii. 317. Riouffe, 181—186. Rev. Mem. xlii. 186.

[3] Tac. Hist. i. 2.

fides, supremæ clarorum virorum necessitates, ipsa necessitas fortiter tolerata, et laudatis antiquorum mortibus pares exitus." *

The professed object of the Decemvirs was to establish a Republic in France, after the model of the ancients, to change the manners, the habits, the public spirit of the country. Sovereignty in the people, magistrates without pride, citizens without vice, simplicity of manners, fraternity of relations, austerity of character; such were the basis on which their institutions were to rest. There was one objection to them, that they were utterly impracticable, from the character of the great body of mankind. To accomplish this object it was indispensable to destroy the whole superior classes of society, to cut off all those who were pre-eminent among their neighbours, either for fortune, rank, talent, or acquirement. This was the end accordingly proposed in the indiscriminate massacres which they put in execution. And what would have been its consequence if completely carried into effect? To sink the whole human race to the level of the lowest classes, and destroy every thing which dignifies or adorns human nature. Such was the chimera which they followed through these oceans of blood. Politicians have no right, after such proceedings, to reproach religious enthusiasm with the reign of the saints, or the approach of the millennium.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 317.

In pursuance of these views, St Just made a laboured report on the general police of the Commonwealth, in which he recapitulated all the fabulous stories of

* Yet the age was not so sterile in virtue as to be destitute of great examples. Mothers attended their dying children, wives followed their exiled husbands, relations were undaunted, sons-in-law, unshaken, firm even against the utmost tortures, the fidelity of slaves, the illustrious subjected to the last necessities; necessity itself bravely endured, and death equal to the most renowned of antiquity, of daily occurrence.

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conspiracies against the Republic; explaining them as efforts of every species of vice against the austere rule of the people; and concluding with holding out the necessity of the government striking without intermission, till it had cut off all those whose corruption opposed itself to the establishment of virtue. "The foundation of all great institutions," said he, "is terror. Where would now have been an indulgent Republic? We have opposed the sword to the sword, and its power is in consequence established. It has emerged from the storm, and its origin is like that of the earth out of the confusion of Chaos, and of man who weeps in the hour of nativity." As a consequence of these principles, he proposed a general measure of proscription against all the nobles, as the irreconcilable opponents of the Revolution,—"You will never," said he, "satisfy the enemies of the people, till you have re-established tyranny in all its horrors. They can never be at peace with you; you do not speak the same language; you will never understand each other. Banish them by an inexorable law; the universe may receive them; and the public safety is our justification." He then proposed a decree which banished all the ex-nobles, all strangers from Paris, the fortified towns, and seaports of France; and declared *hors la loi* whoever did not yield obedience in ten hours to the order. It was received with applause by the Convention, and passed, as all the decrees of government at that time, by acclamation.[1]

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[1] Th. vi. 228, 230. Hist de la Conv. iv. 36, 39.

The Committee of Public Safety, now confident in its own strength, and strong in the universal submission of France, decreed the disbanding of the Revolutionary army, raised to overawe the capital. At the same time the situations of the different ministers were abolished, and twelve committees appointed to carry

on the details of government. These commissions, entirely appointed by the Committee of Public Safety, and dependent on their will, were, in fact, nothing but the offices in which they exercised their mighty and despotic powers.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 230, 231.

Shortly after, steps were taken to extinguish all the popular societies which did not immediately depend on the great parent club of the Jacobins. It was resolved at that society that they would no longer receive any deputation from bodies formed since the 10th August, or keep up any correspondence with them; and that a committee should be appointed, to consider whether it should be maintained with those which were formed before that event. This measure, directed, in an especial manner, against the club of the Cordeliers, the centre of the influence of Danton, soon produced the desired effect. Intimidated by the destruction of the leaders of that great society, the whole other clubs in France, to avoid the coming storm, dissolved themselves; and in less than ten days after the promulgation of this resolution there remained no secondary club in France, but those which were affiliated with the Jacobins at Paris, which thenceforward became the sole organ of government in regulating public opinion. It was next proposed to close the sittings of the Cordeliers; but this was unnecessary; that club, once so terrible, rapidly declined, and soon died a natural death. The Jacobins, swayed with absolute power by the Committee of Public Safety, with their affiliated societies, alone remained of all the innumerable clubs which had sprung up in France. Thus, on all sides, the anarchy of Revolution was destroying itself; and out of its ruins the stern and relentless despotism of a few political fanatics,[2] was

[2] Th. vi. 334—336.

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wringing out of the heart's blood of France the last remnants of democratic fervour.

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Robespierre was the leader of this sect of fanatics; but he was associated in the Committee with zealots more unpitiable or less disinterested than himself.

Character of St Just.

These were St Just and Couthon. The former exhibited the true features of gloomy fanaticism; a regular visage, dark and lank hair, a penetrating and severe look, a melancholy expression of countenance, revived the image of those desperate Scottish enthusiasts of whom modern genius has drawn so graphic a picture.[1] Simple and unostentatious in his habits, austere in private, and indefatigable in public, he was, at twenty-five, the most resolute, because the most sincere of the Decemvirs. A warm admirer of the Republic, he was ever at his post in the committees, and never wanting in resolution during his missions to the armies; enthusiastic in his passion for the multitude, he disdained, like Hebert, to imitate its vices, or pander to its desires. Steeled against every sentiment of pity, he demanded the execution of victims in the same manner as the supply of the armies. Proscriptions like victories were essential to the furtherance of his principles. He early attached himself to Robespierre, from the similarity of their ideas, and the reputation of incorruptibility which he enjoyed; their alliance created a portentous combination of envious domineering passion, with inflexible and systematic severity.[2]

[1] Burley, in Old Mortality, by Sir Walter Scott.

[2] Mig. ii. 318, 319.

And Couthon.

Couthon was the creature of Robespierre. A mild expression of countenance, a figure half-paralyzed, concealed a soul animated with the most unpitiable fanaticism. These three men formed a triumvirate, which soon acquired the management of the Committee, and awakened an animosity on the part of the

other members, which ultimately led to their ruin. In the meanwhile, however, they wielded the whole powers of government; if the Assembly was to be intimidated, St Just was employed; if surprised, Couthon was intrusted; if any opposition was manifested, Robespierre was sent for, and his terrible voice soon stifled the expression of discontent.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 319, 320.

To accomplish their regeneration of the social body, the triumvirate proceeded with gigantic energy, and displayed the most consummate ability. For two months after the fall of Danton, they laboured incessantly to confirm their power. Their commissioners spread terror through the departments, and communicated the requisite impulse to the affiliated Jacobin Clubs, which alone now remained in existence. The National Guard was universally devoted to their will, and proved the ready instrument of the most sanguinary measures. The armies, victorious on every side, warmly supported their energetic administration, and made the frontiers resound with the praise of the government. Strong in the support of such powerful bodies, the fanatical leaders of the Revolution boldly and universally began the work of extermination. The mandates of death issued from the capital, and a thousand guillotines instantly were raised in every town and village of France. Amidst the roar of cannon, the rolling of drums, and the sound of the tocsin, the suspected were everywhere arrested, while the young and active marched off to the defence of the country; fifteen hundred Bastiles, spread through the departments, soon groaned with the multitude of captives; unable to contain their numbers, the monasteries, the palaces, the chateaux, were generally employed as temporary places of confinement.[2] The abodes of festivity, the palaces of kings, the altars of religion, were

Their prodigious Energy.

[2] Pr. Hist. Lac. ii. 149. Mig. ii. 320. Chateaub. Essai Hist. Œuv. i. 61—63.

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loaded with victims; fast as the guillotine did its work, it could not reap the harvest of death which everywhere presented itself; and the crowded state of the prisons soon produced contagious fevers, which swept off thousands of their unhappy inmates.

To support these violent measures, the utmost care was taken to preserve in full vigour the democratical spirit in the Club of the Jacobins, the centre of the Revolutionary action throughout France. By successive *purifications*, as they were called, all those who retained any sentiments of humanity, any tendency towards moderation, were expelled, and none left but men of iron, steeled against every approach to mercy. The Club in this way at length became the complete quintessence of cruelty, and the focus of the most fearful Revolutionary energy. Its influence daily augmented; as he approached the close of his career, Robespierre, suspicious of the Convention and the Mountain, rested almost entirely on that chosen band of adherents, whose emissaries ruled with absolute sway the Municipality and the Departments.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 360. Chateaub. Œuv. i. 61. Mig. ii. 320.

Seven thousand prisoners were soon accumulated in the different places of confinement in Paris; the number throughout France exceeded 200,000. The condition of such a multitude of captives was necessarily miserable in the extreme; the prisons of the Conciergerie, of the Force, and the Mairie, were more horrible than any in Europe. All the comforts which, during the first months of the Reign of Terror, were allowed to the captives of fortune were withdrawn. Such luxuries, it was said, were an insupportable indulgence to the rich aristocrats, while, without the prison-walls, the poor were starving for want. In consequence they established refectories, where the whole prisoners, of whatever rank or sex, were allow-

Great accumulation of Captives at Paris, and throughout France.

ed only the coarsest and most unwholesome fare. None were permitted to purchase better provisions for themselves; and to prevent the possibility of their doing so, a rigorous search was made for money of every description, which was all taken from the captives. Some were even denied the sad consolation of bearing their misfortunes together; and to the terrors of solitary confinement were added those of death, which daily became more urgent and inevitable. Not content with the real terrors which they presented, the ingenuity of the jailers was exerted to produce imaginary anxiety; the long nights were frequently interrupted by visits from the executioners, solely intended to excite alarm; the few hours of sleep allowed to the victims were broken by the rattling of chains, and unbarring of doors, to induce the belief that their fellow-prisoners were about to be led to the scaffold; and the warrants for death against eighty persons were made the means of keeping six hundred in agony.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 18, 149, 150, 319. Riouffe, 83. Lac. ii. 149. Toul. iv. 358, 360.

Dissatisfied with the progress of the executions, the Revolutionary Tribunal fell upon an extraordinary expedient to accelerate them. By the prospect of amnesty to themselves, they prevailed on some of the basest of the captives to announce a project for escape in the prisons. "We must have a conspiracy," said Fouquier Tinville, "in the prisons; its chiefs are already named; choose their companions, we must have sixty or a hundred." The victims whom the traitors selected were those whose rank or fortune was most likely to render them acceptable to the Committee; their names were announced aloud in the prisons, and they were led out next morning to execution.[2]

Pretended Conspiracy in the Prisons.

[2] Lac. ii. 150, 151. Th. vi. 363, 364.

Despair of life, recklessness of the future, produced their usual effects on the unhappy crowd of captives.

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Some sunk into sullen indifference; others indulged in immoderate gaiety, and sought to amuse life even to the foot of the scaffold. The day before his execution, the poet Ducorneau composed a beautiful ode, which was sung in chorus by the whole prisoners, and repeated, with a slight variation, after his execution.* At other times the scene changed; in the midst of their ravings the prisoners first destined for the scaffold, were transported by the Phedon of Plato, and the death of Socrates; infidelity in its last moments betook itself with delight to the sublime belief of the immortality of the soul. The affections, continually called forth, flowed with uncommon warmth; their mutual fate excited among the prisoners the strongest feelings of commiseration; and nothing astonished the few who escaped from confinement so much as the want of sympathy for the sufferings of mankind which generally prevailed in the world.[1]

[1] Riouffe, 108, 111. Th. vi. 320.

Picture of the Prisons during this period.

From the farthest extremities of France crowds of prisoners daily arrived at the gates of the Conciergerie, which successively sent forth its bands of victims to the scaffold. Grey hairs, and youthful forms; countenances blooming with health, and faces worn with suffering; beauty and talent, rank and virtue, were indiscriminately rolled together to the fatal doors. With truth might have been written over their portals what Dante placed over the entrance of the infernal regions:—

"Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate."

* In the transport of the moment another exclaimed in extempore verse—

"Amis! Combien il y a d'attraits
L'instant ou s'unissent nos âmes!
Le cœur juste est toujours en paix,
O doux plaisir qui n'eut jamais
L'Ambitieux avec ses trammes;
Venez Bourreaux; nous sommes prêts."

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Sixty persons often arrived in a day, and as many were on the following morning sent out to execution. Night and day the cars incessantly discharged victims into the prison; weeping mothers, and trembling orphans, were thrust in without mercy with the brave and the powerful; the young, the beautiful, the unfortunate, seemed in a peculiar manner the prey of the assassins. Nor were the means of evacuating the prisons augmented in a less fearful progression. Fifteen only were at first placed on the chariot, but their number was soon augmented to thirty, and gradually rose to eighty persons, who daily were sent forth to the place of execution; when the fall of Robespierre put a stop to the murders, arrangements had been made for increasing it to one hundred and fifty. An immense aqueduct, to remove the gore, had been dug as far as the Place St Antoine; and four men were daily employed in emptying the blood of the victims into that reservoir.[1]

[1] Riouffe, 83, 84. Th. vi. 319.

It was at three in the afternoon when the melancholy procession set out from the Conciergerie; the troop slowly passed through the vaulted passages of the prison, amidst crowds of captives, who gazed with insatiable avidity on the aspect of those about to undergo a fate which might so soon become their own. The higher orders in general behaved with firmness and serenity; silently they marched to death, with their eyes fixed on the heavens, lest their looks should betray their indignation. Numbers of the lower class piteously bewailed their fate, and called heaven and earth to witness their innocence. The pity of the spectators was in a peculiar manner excited by the bands of females led out together to execution; fourteen young women of Verdun, of the most attractive forms, were cut off together. "The day after their execu-

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tion," says Riouffe, "the court of the prison looked like a garden bereaved of its flowers by a tempest." On another occasion, twenty women of Poitou, chiefly the wives of peasants, were placed together on the chariot; some died on the way, and the wretches guillotined their lifeless remains; one kept her infant in her bosom till she reached the foot of the scaffold; the executioners tore the innocent from her breast, as she suckled it for the last time, and the screams of maternal agony were only stifled with her life. In removing the prisoners from the jail of the Maison Lazare, one of the women declared herself with child, and on the point of delivery; the hard-hearted jailers compelled her to move on; she did so, uttering piercing shrieks, and at length fell on the ground, and was delivered of an infant in presence of her persecutors.[1]

[1] Riouffe, 85, 87. Tableau, Hist. de la Maison Lazare Rev. Mem. xxiii. 226.

Such accumulated horrors annihilated all the charities and intercourse of life. Before daybreak the shops of the provision-merchants were besieged by crowds of women and children, clamouring for the food which the law of the *maximum* in general prevented them from obtaining. The farmers trembled to bring their fruits to the market, the shopkeepers to expose them to sale. The richest quarters of the town were deserted; no equipages or crowds of passengers were to be seen on the streets; the sinister words, *Propriété Nationale*, imprinted in large characters on the walls, everywhere showed how far the work of confiscation had proceeded. Passengers hesitated to address their most intimate friends on meeting; the extent of calamity had rendered men suspicious even of those they loved the most. Every one assumed the coarsest dress, and the most squalid appearance; an elegant exterior would have been the certain forerunner of destruction.[2] At one hour only

Dreadful Espionage in Paris and the other towns.

[2] Lac. ii. 151, 152. Th. vi. 318, 319.

were any symptoms of animation to be seen; it was when the victims were conveyed to execution; the humane fled with horror from the sight; the infuriated rushed in crowds to satiate their eyes with the sight of human agony.

Night came, but with it no diminution of the anxiety of the people. Every family early assembled its members; with trembling looks they gazed round the room, fearful that the very walls might harbour traitors. The sound of a foot, the stroke of a hammer, a voice in the street, froze all hearts with horror. If a knock was heard at the door, every one in agonized suspense expected his fate. Unable to endure such protracted misery, numbers committed suicide. "Had the reign of Robespierre," says Freron, "continued longer, multitudes would have thrown themselves under the guillotine; the first of social affections, the love of life, was already extinguished in almost every heart."[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 2. Toul. iv. 235, 236. Riouffe, 83. Freron, 49.

In the midst of these unparalleled atrocities, the Convention were occupied with the establishment of the civic virtues. Robespierre pronounced a discourse on the qualities suited to a Republic. He dedicated a certain number of the decennial fêtes to the Supreme Being, to Truth, to Justice, to Modesty, to Friendship, to Frugality, to Good Faith, to Glory, and to Immorality! Barrere prepared a report on the suppression of mendicity, and the means of relieving the indigent poor. Robespierre had now reached the zenith of his popularity with his faction; he was denominated the Great Man of the Republic; his virtue, his genius, his eloquence, were in every mouth.[2]

Convention meanwhile is occupied with the civil virtues.

[2] Mig. ii. 320, 321.

The speech which Robespierre made on this occasion was one of the most remarkable of his whole career. "The idea," said he, "of a Supreme Being, and

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of the immortality of the soul, is a continual call to justice; it is therefore a social and republican principle. Who has authorized you to declare that the Deity does not exist? Oh! you who support in such impassioned strains so arid a doctrine, what advantage do you expect to derive from the principle that a blind fatality regulates the affairs of men, and that the soul is nothing but a breath of air impelled towards the tomb? Will the idea of nonentity inspire man with more pure and elevated sentiments than that of immortality? will it awaken more respect for others or himself, more courage to resist tyranny, greater contempt for pleasure or death? You who regret a virtuous friend, can you endure the thought that his noblest part has not escaped dissolution? You who weep over the remains of a child or a wife, are you consoled by the thought that a handful of dust is all that remains of the beloved object? You, the unfortunate, who expire under the strokes of an assassin, is not your last voice raised to appeal to the justice of the Most High? Innocence on the scaffold, supported by such thoughts, makes the tyrant turn pale on his triumphal car. Could such an ascendant be felt, if the tomb levelled alike the oppressor and his victim?

"Observe how on all former occasions tyrants have sought to stifle the idea of the immortality of the soul. With what art did Cæsar, when pleading in the Roman Senate in favour of the accomplices of Catiline, endeavour to throw doubts on the belief of its immortality; while Cicero invokes against the traitor the sword of the laws and the vengeance of Heaven! Socrates, on the verge of death, discoursed with his friends on the ennobling theme; Leonidas, at Thermopylæ, on the eve of executing the most heroic design ever conceived by man, invited his companions

to a banquet in another world. The principles of the Stoics gave birth to Brutus and Cato even in the ages which witnessed the expiry of Roman virtue; they alone saved the honour of human nature, almost obliterated by the vices and the corruption of the empire. CHAP. XIV. 1794.

"The Encyclopedists, who introduced the frightful doctrine of Atheism, were ever in politics below the dignity of freedom; in morality they went as far beyond the dictates of reason. Their disciples declaimed against despotism, and received the pensions of despots; they composed alternately tirades against kings, and madrigals for their mistresses; they were fierce with their pens, and rampant in antechambers. That sect propagated with infinite care the principles of Materialism: We owe to them that selfish philosophy which reduced egotism to a system; regarded human society as a game of chance, where success was the sole distinction between what was just and unjust; probity as an affair of taste or good breeding; the world as the patrimony of the most dexterous of scoundrels.

"The priests have figured to themselves a god in their own image; they have made him jealous, capricious, cruel, covetous, implacable; they have enthroned him in the heavens as a palace, and called him to the earth only to demand, for their behoof, tithes, riches, pleasures, honours, and power. The true temple of the Supreme Being is the universe; his worship virtue; his fêtes the joy of a great people, assembled under his eyes to tighten the bonds of social affection, and present to him the homage of pure and grateful hearts." In the midst of the acclamations produced by these eloquent words, the Assembly decreed unanimously that they recognised the existence of the Su- May 7, 1794.

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preme Being, and of the immortality of the soul, and that the worship most worthy of him was the practice of the social virtues.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 246–251.

This speech is not only remarkable as containing the religious views of so memorable an actor in the bloodiest periods of the Revolution, but as involving a moral lesson of perhaps greater moment than any that occurred during its whole progress. For the first time in the annals of mankind, a great nation had thrown off all religious principles, and openly defied the power of Heaven itself; and from amidst the wreck which was occasioned by the unchaining of human passions, arose a solemn recognition of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul! It seemed as if Providence had permitted human wickedness to run its utmost length, in order, amidst the frightful scene, to demonstrate the necessity of religious belief, and vindicate the majesty of its moral government. In vain an infidel generation sought to establish the frigid doctrine of Materialism; their principles received their full developement; the anarchy they are fitted to induce was experienced, and that recognition was wrung from a suffering, which had been denied by a prosperous age.

Nor is this speech less striking as evincing the fanaticism of that extraordinary period, and the manner in which, during revolutionary convulsions, the most atrocious actions are made to flow from the most pure and benevolent expressions. If you consider the actions of Robespierre, he appears the most sanguinary tyrant that ever desolated the earth; if you reflect on his words, they seem dictated only by the noblest and most elevated feelings. There is nothing impossible in such a combination; the history of the world exhibits too many examples of its occurrence;

it is the nature of fanaticism, whether religious or political, to produce it. The Inquisition of Spain, the *auto da fés* of Castile, arose from the same principles as the daily executions of the French tyrant. It is because revolutions lead to such terrible results, by so flowery and seductive a path, that they are chiefly dangerous; and because the ruin thus induced is irrecoverable, that the seducers of nations are doomed by inexorable justice to the same infamy as the betrayers of individuals.

Unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Robespierre and Collot d'Herbois.

Two unsuccessful attempts at assassination increased, as is always the case, the power of the tyrant. The first of these was made by an obscure, but intrepid man, of the name of L'Admiral, who tried to assassinate Collot d'Herbois; the second by a young woman, named Cecile Renaud. L'Admiral, when brought before his judges, openly avowed that he had intended to assassinate Robespierre before Collot d'Herbois. When called on to divulge who prompted him to the commission of such a crime, he replied firmly, "That it was not a crime; that he wished only to render a service to his country; that he had conceived the project without any external suggestion; and that his only regret was that he had not succeeded." The latter called at his house, and entreated, in the most earnest manner, to see Robespierre; the urgency of her manner excited the suspicion of his attendants, and she was arrested. Two knives, found in her bundle, sufficiently evinced the purpose of her visit. Being asked what was her motive for wishing to see him, she replied, "I wished to see how a tyrant was made. I admit I am a Royalist, because I prefer one king to fifty thousand." She behaved on the scaffold with the firmness of Charlotte Corday; her whole relations, to the number of sixty, were involved in her fate,[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 322. Lac. ii. 162, 163. Th. vi. 321. 323, 326.

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among whom were a number of young men, bravely combating on the frontier in defence of their country.

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Meanwhile, a magnificent fête was prepared by the Convention in honour of the Supreme Being. Two days before it took place, Robespierre was appointed President, and intrusted with the duty of Supreme Pontiff on the occasion. He marched fifteen feet in advance of his colleagues, in a brilliant costume, bearing flowers and fruits in his hands. His address which followed to the people was both powerful and eloquent; the generous sentiments which it contained revived hopes long dormant in their breasts, but all were dashed by the concluding words. "People! to-day let us give ourselves up to the transports of pure happiness; to-morrow we will with increased energy combat vice and the tyrants." The ceremony on this occasion, which was arranged under the direction of the painter David, was very magnificent. An amphitheatre was placed in the garden of the Tuileries, opposite to which were statues representing Atheism, Discord, and Selfishness, which were destined to be burnt by the hand of Robespierre. Beautiful music opened the ceremony, and the President, after an eloquent speech, seized a torch, and set fire to the figures, which were soon consumed; and when the smoke cleared away, an effigy of Wisdom was seen in their place, but it was remarked that it was blackened by the smoke of those that had been consumed. Thence they proceeded to the Champs de Mars, where patriotic songs were sung, oaths taken by the young, and homage offered to the Supreme Being.[1]

Fête in honour of the Supreme Being.

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[1] Th. vi. 340, 342. Mig. ii. 322.

The Committee of Public Safety being now avowedly in possession of supreme power, their adulators in the Convention and Jacobin Club offered them the ensigns of sovereignty. But they had the good sense

to perceive that the people were not yet prepared for this change, and that the sight of guards or a throne might shake a power which 500,000 captives in chains could not expose to obloquy. "The Members of the Committee," said Couthon, "have no desire to be assimilated to despots; they have no need of guards for their defence; their own virtue, the love of the people, Providence, watch over their days; they have no occasion for any other protection. When necessary, they will know how to die at their post in defence of freedom."[1]

[1] Th. vi. 329.

June 9, 1794. Additional Powers conferred on the Revolutionary Tribunal.

The bloody intentions announced by Robespierre were too effectually carried into effect on the day following the fête of the Supreme Being, by the decree of the 22d Prairial, passed on the motion of Couthon. By this sanguinary law, every form, privilege, or usage, calculated to protect the accused, were swept away. "Every postponement of justice," says Couthon, "is a crime; every formality indulgent to the accused is a crime; the delay in punishing the enemies of the country should not be greater than the time requisite for identifying them." The right of insisting for an individual investigation, and of being defended by counsel, were withdrawn. In addition to those struck at by former laws, there were included in this new decree "all those who have seconded the projects of the enemies of France, either by favouring the retreat of, or shielding from punishment, the aristocracy or conspirators; or by persecuting and calumniating the patriots, or by corrupting the mandatories of the people; or by abusing the principles of the Revolution, of the laws, or of the government, by false or perfidious applications, or by deceiving the representatives of the people, or by spreading discouragement or false intelligence, or by misleading the public by false in-

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struction or depraved example." The proof requisite to convict of these multifarious offences was declared to be, "Every piece of evidence, material, moral, verbal, or written, which is sufficient to convince a reasonable understanding." The Revolutionary Tribunal was divided into four separate courts, each possessing the same powers as the original, and a public accuser, and sufficient number of judges and jurymen, awarded to each, to enable them to proceed with rapidity in the work of extermination.[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 160, 161. Th. vi. 346, 347. Mig. ii. 323.

Debate on it in the Assembly;

Accustomed as the Convention was to blind obedience, they were startled with this project. "If this law passes, nothing remains," says Ruamps, "but to blow out our brains." Alarmed at the agitation which prevailed, Robespierre mounted the Tribune. "For long," said he, "the Assembly has argued and decided on the same day, because for long it has been liberated from the empire of faction. I demand, that instead of pausing on the proposal for adjournment, we sit till eight at night if necessary, to discuss the project of the law which has now been submitted to it." The Assembly felt its weakness, and in thirty minutes the decree was *unanimously* adopted.[2]

[2] Mig. ii. 324. Th. vi. 349.

On the following day, some Members, chiefly adherents of the old party of Danton, endeavoured to overthrow this sanguinary decree of the Assembly. Bourdon de L'Oise proposed that the safety of the Members of the Assembly should be provided for by a special enactment. He was ably supported by Merlin; and the Legislature seemed inclined to adopt the proposal. Couthon attacked the Mountain, from which the opposition seemed chiefly to emanate. Bourdon replied: "Let the Members of the Committee know," said he, "that if they are patriots, so are we. I esteem Couthon, I esteem the Committee; but, more

But it is nevertheless carried.

than all, I esteem the unconquerable Mountain, which has saved the public freedom."—"The Convention, the Committee," said Robespierre, "the Mountain, are the same thing. Every representative who loves liberty, every representative who is resolved to die for his country, is part of the Mountain. Woe to those who would assassinate the people, by permitting some miserable intriguers to divide the patriots, in order to elevate themselves on the public ruin!" The imperious tone of Robespierre, the menaces of his colleagues, again overawed the Assembly, and the law passed without the protecting clause proposed by Bourdon. Every individual in the Convention was now at the mercy of the Dictators; and the daily spectacle of fifty persons executed, was enough to subdue more undaunted spirits.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 325. Lac. ii. 170. Th. vi. 350—353. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 367.

Armed by this accession of power, the proscriptions proceeded, during the next two months, with redoubled violence. The power of Robespierre was prodigious, and wielded with an energy to which there is nothing comparable in the history of modern Europe. The ruling principle of his government was to destroy the whole aristocracy, both of rank and talent.[2] It was on this foundation that his authority rested; the mass of the people ardently supported a government which was rapidly destroying every thing which was above them in station, or superior in ability. Every man felt his own consequence increased, and his own prospects improved, by the destruction of his more fortunate rivals. Inexorable towards individuals or leaders, Robespierre was careful of protecting the masses of the community; and the lower orders, who always have a secret pleasure in the depression of their superiors, beheld with satisfaction the thunder which rolled innocuous over their heads, striking every one who

[2] Brissot's Memoires, ii. 22.

Rapid increase of the Proscriptions.

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could by possibility stand in their way. The whole physical force of the Republic, which must always be drawn from the labouring classes, was thus devoted to his will. The armed force of Paris, under the orders of Henriot, and formed of the lowest of the rabble, was at his disposal; the club of the Jacobins, purified and composed according to his orders, were ready to support all his projects; the Revolutionary Tribunal blindly obeyed his commands; the new Municipality, with Henriot at its head, was devoted to his will. By the activity of the Jacobin Clubs, and the universal prevalence of the same interests, the same state of things prevailed in every department of France. Universally the lowest class considered Robespierre as identified with the Revolution, and as centring in his person all the projects of aggrandizement which were afloat in their minds. None remained to contest his authority but the remnants of the Constitutional and Girondist parties, who still lingered in the Assembly.[1]

Means by which the Support of the People was secured.

[1] Mig. ii. 326, 327.

The insolence of power, and the atrocious cruelty of revolutionary revenge, was, if possible, more strongly evinced in the provinces than in the metropolis. The disturbances on the northern frontier led to the special mission of a monster named Le Bon to these districts, armed with the power of the Revolutionary Government. His appearance in these departments could be compared to nothing but the apparition of those hideous furies so much the subject of dread in the times of paganism. In the city of Arras, above two thousand persons, brought there from the neighbouring departments, perished by the guillotine. Mingling treachery and seduction with sanguinary oppression, he turned the despotic powers with which he was invested into the means of individual gratification. After having disgraced the wife of a nobleman who yielded

Cruelties in the Provinces. Le Bon at Arras.

to his embraces in order to save her husband's life, he put the man to death before the eyes of his devoted consort; a species of treachery so common, says Prudhomme, that the examples of it were innumerable. Children whom he had corrupted were employed by him as spies upon their parents; and so infectious did the cruel example become, that the favourite amusement of this little band was putting to death birds and small animals, with little guillotines made for their use.[1]*

[1] Th. vi. 376, 377. Prudhomme, Victims de la Revolution, ii. 274. Chateaub. Etud. Hist. i. 102. Preface.

The career of Carrier at Nantes, where the popular vengeance was to be inflicted on the Royalists of the western provinces, was still more relentless. Five hundred children of both sexes, the eldest of whom was not fourteen years old, were led out to the same spot to be shot. Never was so deplorable a spectacle witnessed. The littleness of their stature caused most of the bullets, at the first discharge, to fly over their heads; they broke their bonds, rushed into the ranks of the executioners, clung round their knees, and with supplicating hands, and agonized looks, sought for mercy. Nothing could soften these assassins; they put them to death even when lying at their feet. A large party of women, most of whom were with child, and many with babes at their breast, were put on board the boats in the Loire. The innocent caresses, the unconscious smiles of these little innocents, filled their mothers' breasts with inexpressible anguish; they

Carrier at Nantes.

* It is a curious fact, highly illustrative of the progress of Revolutions, that this monster in the human form was at first humane and inoffensive in his government, and it was not till he had received reiterated orders from Robespierre, with a hint of a dungeon in case of refusal, that his atrocities commenced. Let no man, if he is not conscious of the utmost firmness of mind, be sure that he would not, in similar circumstances, have done the same.—Duchess D'Abrantes, vii. 213, 214.

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fondly pressed them to their bosoms, weeping over them for the last time. One of them was delivered of an infant on the quay; hardly were the agonies of childbirth over, when she was pushed, with the new-born innocent, into the galley. After being stripped naked, their hands were tied behind their backs; their shrieks and lamentations were answered by strokes of the sabre, and while struggling betwixt terror and shame to conceal their nudity from the gaze of the executioners, the signal was given, the planks cut, and the shrieking victims for ever buried in the waves.[1]

[1] Prudhomme, ii. 27. Chateaub. Etud. Hist. i. 102.

Human cruelty, it would be supposed, could hardly go beyond these executions, but it was exceeded by Le Bon at Bourdeaux. A woman was accused of having wept at the execution of her husband; she was condemned, amidst the applauses of the multitude, to sit several hours under the suspended blade, which shed upon her, drop by drop, the blood of the deceased, whose corpse was above her on the scaffold, before she was released by death from her agony.[2]

[2] Louvet, 123.

General apathy of the class of Proprietors.

One of the most extraordinary features of these terrible times, was the apathy which the better classes both in Paris and the provinces evinced, and the universal disposition to bury anxiety in the delirium of present enjoyment. The people who had escaped death went to the operas daily, with equal unconcern whether thirty or an hundred heads had fallen during the day. The class of proprietors at Bourdeaux, Marseilles, and all the principal towns, timid and vacillating, could not be prevailed on to quit their hearths, while the Jacobins, ardent, reckless, and indefatigable, inured to crime, plunged a merciless sword into the bosom of the country. The soldiers everywhere supported their tyranny; the prospect of ransacking cellars, ravishing women, and plundering coffers, made them uni-

versally faithful to the government." "When in a country which we all conceived to be on the point of regeneration," says Louvet, "the men of property were everywhere so timid, and the wicked so audacious, it became evident that all assemblages of men, once dignified with the name of the people by such fools as myself, are, in truth, nothing more than an imbecile herd, too happy to be permitted to crouch under the yoke of a despotic master."[1] CHAP. XIV. 1794. [1] Louvet, 124, 125. Mercier's Tab. de Paris.

Malesherbes, the generous and intrepid defender of Louis XVI., was too immaculate a character to escape destruction. For some time he had lived in the country, in the closest retirement; a young man accused of emigration, concealed in his house, furnished a pretext for the apprehension of the venerable old man and all his family. When he arrived at the prison, all the captives rose up and crowded round him; they brought him a seat: "I thank you," said he, "for the attention you pay to my age, but I perceive one amongst you feebler than myself, give it to him." He was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal along with his whole family; even the judges of that sanguinary court turned aside their heads to avert the heart-rending spectacle. They were all condemned together. His daughter, Madame de Rozambo, when preparing to mount the fatal chariot, perceived Mademoiselle Sombreuil, whose heroic devotion had saved her father on the second of September, but who had again followed him to prison. Throwing herself into her arms, she exclaimed:—"You have had the good fortune to save your father, and I have the glory of dying with mine."[2] Execution of Malesherbes; And his family. [2] Lac. ii. 147, 157.

Madame Elizabeth, sister to Louis XVI., was the next victim. When she was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, the judges and the jury mani- Of Madame Elizabeth.

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fested an unusual degree of impatience for her condemnation. Like the King and Queen she manifested the utmost composure and serenity when under examination; her answers, clear, distinct, and perfectly true, left no room for suspicion or misconstruction. Being accused of having succoured some men who had been wounded in the Camps Elysées, on the occasion of the revolt, she replied, "Humanity alone led me to dress their wounds; I needed no enquiry into the origin of their sufferings to feel the obligation to relieve them. I never thought this a merit, but I cannot see how it can be considered as a crime." —"Admit, at least," said the President, "that you have nourished in the young Capet the hope of regaining the throne of his father."—"I devoted myself," said she, "to the care of that infant, who was the more dear to me, as he had lost those to whom he owed his being." Being accused of being an accomplice of the tyrant:—"If my brother had been a tyrant," she replied, "neither you nor I would have been where we now are." She was condemned along with many others of illustrious rank and dignified virtue. On the chariot she declared that one of her companions had disclosed to her that she was pregnant, and thus was the means of saving her life. She died with the serenity of an angel, praying for those who had taken her life. The beauty of her form, and the placidity of her expression, awakened sentiments of commiseration even among the most savage of the Revolutionary spectators.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 344. Lac. xi. 423, 424.

Custine, son of the celebrated general of the same name, was executed for having let fall some expressions of attachment to his father; Alexander Beauharnais for having failed to raise the siege of Mayence. The letters of both to their wives, the night before their

Of Custine's son, Luckner, Biron, and Dietrich.

execution, exhibited the most touching strains of eloquence. Marshal Luckner, whom the Jacobins had so long represented as the destined saviour of France; General Biron, whose amiable qualities, notwithstanding the profligacy of his character, had long endeared him to society; General Lamartiliere, whose successful war of posts had so long covered the northern frontier, and many other distinguished warriors, were sent to the scaffold. All showed the same heroism in their last moments, but not greater than was displayed by pacific citizens and young women who had been totally unaccustomed to face danger. Dietrich, mayor of Strasburg, one of the most ardent friends of liberty, wrote to his son the night before his execution, "as he valued his last blessing, never to attempt to revenge his death." One prisoner, alone, excited the indignation of the spectators, by raising piteous cries on the chariot, and striving in a frenzy of terror, with the executioners on the scaffold; it was Madame du Barri, the associate of the infamous pleasures of Louis XV.[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 160.

The Committee of Public Safety incessantly urged Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, to accelerate the executions. He himself declared, in his subsequent trial, "That on one occasion they ordered him to increase them to one hundred and fifty a-day, and that the proposal filled his mind with such horror, that as he returned from the Seine, the river appeared to run red with blood." The pretended conspiracy in the prisons served as an excuse for a frightful multiplication in the number of victims. One hundred and sixty victims were denounced in the prison of the Luxembourg alone; and from one to two hundred in all the other prisons of Paris. A fabricated attempt at escape in the prison of La Force, was made the

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ground for sending several hundreds to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Fouquier Tinville had made such an enlargement of the hall of that dreaded court, that room was afforded for one hundred and sixty to be tried at once; and he proposed to place at the bar the whole prisoners charged with the conspiracy in the Luxembourg at one sitting. He even went so far as to erect a guillotine in the court room, in order to execute the prisoners the moment the sentence was pronounced; but Collot d'Herbois objected to this, as tending "to demoralize punishment."[1]*

[1] Th. vi. 363, 364. Lac. ii. 161. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 386, 388.

* The condition of the prisoners in these jails of Paris, where above ten thousand persons were at last confined, was dreadful beyond what imagination could conceive. The following description is from an eye-witness of their horrors: the fastidiousness of modern manners may revolt at some of its details, but the truth of history requires that they should be recorded. "From the outer-room where examinations are conducted, you enter by two enormous doors into the dungeons: infected and damp abodes, where enormous rats carry on a continual war against the unhappy wretches who are there accumulated together, gnawing their ears, noses, and clothing, and depriving them of a moment's respite even by sleep. Hardly ever does day light penetrate into the gloomy abodes: the straw which composes the litter of the prisoners soon becomes rotten from want of air, and from the ordure and excrement with which it is covered; and such is the stench thence arising, that a stranger on entering the door feels as if he was suffocated. The prisoners are all either in what are called the straw chambers, or in the dungeons. Thus poverty is there regarded as a fresh crime, and leads to the most dreadful punishment; for a lengthened abode in these horrid receptacles is worse than death itself. The dungeons are never opened but for inspection, to give food to the prisoners, or empty the vases. The superior class of chambers called the straw apartments, do not differ from the dungeons, except in this, that their inhabitants are permitted to go out at eight in the morning, and to remain out till an hour before sunset. During the intervening period, they are allowed to walk in the court, or huddle together in the galleries which surround it, where they are suffocated by infected odours. There is the same accumulation of horror in their sleeping chambers: no air, rotten straw, and perhaps fifty prisoners thrust into one hole with their head lying on their own ordure, surrounded by every species of filth and contagion. Nor were these disgusting circumstances the only degradation which awaited the unhappy prison-

The trial of these unhappy captives was as brief as during the massacres in the prisons. "Did you know of the conspiracy of the prisons, Dorival?" "No."—"I expected no other answer, but it will not avail you." To another—"Are not you an ex-noble?" "Yes." To a third—"Are you not a priest?" "Yes, but I have taken the oath." "You have no right to speak; be silent."—"Were not you architect to Madame?" "Yes, but I was disgraced in 1788."—"Had you not a father-in-law in the Luxembourg?" "Yes." Such were the questions which constituted the sole trial of the numerous accused; no witnesses were called; their condemnations were pronounced almost as rapidly as their names were called; the law of 22d Prairial had dispensed with the necessity of taking any evidence, when the court were convinced by moral presumptions. The indictments were thrown off by hundreds at once, and the name of the individual merely filled in; the judgments were printed with equal rapidity, in a room adjoining the court; and several thousand copies circulated through Paris by little urchins, exclaiming, amidst weeping and distracted crowds,—"Here are the names of those who have gained prizes in the lottery of the holy guillotine." The accused were executed at leaving the court, or at latest on the following morning.[1]

[1] Process de Fouquier Tinville. Th. vi. 366, 367.

ers. No one could conceive the degradation to which the human species can be reduced, who had not witnessed the calling of the roll in the evening: when three or four turnkeys, each with half-a-dozen fierce dogs held in a leash, call the unhappy prisoners to answer to their names, threatening, swearing, and insulting, while they are supplicating, weeping, imploring: often they ordered them to go out and come in three or four times over till they were satisfied that the trembling troop was complete: The cells for the women were as horrid as those for the men, equally dark, humid, filthy, crowded and suffocating: and it was there that all the rank and beauty of Paris was assembled.—Hist. de la Convention, iii. 383, 386.

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Since the law of the 22d Prairial had been passed, the heads fell at the rate of fifty or sixty a-day. "This is well," said Fouquier Tinville; but we must get on more rapidly in the next decade; four hundred and fifty is the very least that must then be served up." To facilitate this immense increase, spies were sent into the prisons in order to extract from the unhappy wretches their secrets, and designate to the public accuser those who might first be selected. These infamous wretches soon became the terror of the captives. They were enclosed as suspected persons, but their real mission was soon apparent from their insolence, their consequential airs, the preference shown them by the jailers, their orgies at the doors of the cells with the agents of the police. They were caressed, implored by the trembling prisoners, and received whatever little sums they had been able to secrete about their persons, to keep their names out of the black list; but in vain. The names of such as they chose to denounce, were made up in a list called, in the prisons, "The Evening Journal," and the public chariots sent at night-fall to convey them to the Conciergerie preparatory to their trial on the following morning.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 368, 369. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 386, 388.

When the unfortunate captives heard the rolling of the wheels of the cars which were sent to convey them, the most agonizing suspense prevailed in the prisons. They flocked to the wickets of their corridors, placed their ears on the bars to hear the list, and trembled lest their name should be called out by the officers. Those who were named embraced their companions in misfortune, and received their last adieus; often the most heart-rending separations were witnessed; a father tore himself from the arms of his children, a husband from his shrieking wife. Those who sur-

vived had reason to envy the lot of those conducted to the den of Fouquier Tinville; restored to their cells, they remained in a state of suspense worse than death itself, till the same hour on the following night, when the rolling of the chariot wheels renewed the universal agony of the captives.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 368, 369.

Agony of the Prisoners.

To such a degree did the torture of suspense prey upon the minds of the prisoners, that they became not only reckless of life, but anxious for death. The inhabitants who had reason to apprehend detention, became indifferent to all the precautions requisite to secure their safety; many who had escaped, voluntarily surrendered themselves to their persecutors, or waited, on the high-road, the first band of the National Guard to apprehend them. The young Princess of Monaco, in the flower of youth and beauty, after receiving her sentence, declared herself pregnant, and obtained a respite; the horrors of surviving those she loved, however, so preyed upon her mind, that, the next day, she retracted her declaration, and died with sublime devotion. Madame Lavergne had hoped that, by her intercession, she would move the hearts of the judges in favour of her husband, the commandant of Longwy. When she saw that all was unavailing, and that sentence of death was pronounced, a cry of *Vive le Roi* was heard; all the spectators trembled at the fatal words: *Vive le Roi!* exclaimed his wife in more energetic terms, and when those next her exclaimed that she had lost her reason, she repeated the same words in a calmer voice, so as to leave no room for doubt as to her deliberate intention. She obtained the recompense she desired in dying beside her husband. Soon after a sister followed the same method to avoid surviving her brother, and a young woman, to accompany the object of her affec-

Death of the Princess of Monaco.

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tion to another world. Servants frequently insisted upon following their masters to prison, and perished with them on the scaffold. Many daughters went on their knees to the members of the Revolutionary Committee, to be allowed to join their parents in captivity, and, when brought to trial, pleaded guilty, though innocent, to the same charges. The efforts of the Court and Jury were unable to make them separate their cases; the tears of their parents even were unavailing; in the generous contention, filial affection prevailed over parental love. A father and son were confined together in the Maison Lazare; the latter was involved in one of the fabricated conspiracies of the prison; when his name was called out to stand his trial, his father came forward, and, by personating his son, was the means of saving his life, by dying in his stead.—"Do you know," said the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal to Isabeau, "in whose presence you are standing?"—"Yes," replied the undaunted young man; "it is here that formerly virtue judged crime, and that now crime murders innocence."[1]

[1] Lac. ii. 164, 166.

Lavoisier, Roucher, and others.

The vengeance of the tyrants fell with peculiar severity upon all whose talents or descent distinguished them from the rest of mankind. The son of Buffon, the daughter of Vernet, perished without regard to the illustrious names they bore; Florian, the eloquent novelist, was so horror-struck with the scenes he had witnessed in prison, that he died after the hour of deliverance had arrived. Lavoisier was cut off in the midst of his profound chemical researches; he pleaded in vain for a respite to complete a scientific discovery; almost all the members of the French Academy were in prison, in hourly expectation of their fate. Roucher, an amiable poet, a few hours before

his death, sent his miniature to his children, accompanied by these touching lines— CHAP. XIV. 1794.

> " Ne vous étonnez pas objets charmans et doux,
> Si quelque air de tristesse obscurcit mon visage;
> Lorsqu'un crayon savant dessinait mon image,
> J'attendais l'Echafaud et je songeais à vous."

Chenier, a young man, whose eloquent writings pointed him out as the future historian of the Revolution, and Champfort, one of its earliest and ablest supporters, were executed at the same time. A few weeks longer would have swept off the whole literary talent, as well as dignified names of France.[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 48, 49. and Pr. Hist. ii. 166, 167. Th. vi. 428.

But there is a limit to human suffering; an hour when indignant nature will no longer submit, and courage arises out of despair. To that avenging hour time was fast approaching. The lengthened files of prisoners daily led to the scaffold had long excited the commiseration of the better classes in Paris; the shops in the Rue St Honorè were shut, and its pavement deserted, when the melancholy procession, moving towards the place de la Revolution, passed along. Alarmed at these signs of dissatisfaction, the Committee changed the place of execution, and fixed it at the Barrier de Trone, in the Fauxbourg St Antoine; but even the workmen of that revolutionary district manifested impatience at the constant repetition of the dismal spectacle. The middling classes who constituted the strength of the National Guard of Paris, began to be alarmed at the rapid progress and *evident descent* of the proscriptions. At first the nobles and ecclesiastics only were included; by degrees the whole landed proprietors were reached; but now the work of destruction seemed to be fast approaching every class above the lowest. On the lists of the Revolutionary Tribunal, in the latter days of the Reign of Terror, are to be found tailors, shoemakers, hairdres-

Horror at length excited by the number and descent of the Executions.

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sers, butchers, farmers, mechanics, and workmen, accused of anti-revolutionary principles. From the 10th June to the 17th July, that court had sentenced twelve hundred and eighty-five persons to death. The people felt pity for these proscriptions, not only from their frequency, but their near approach to themselves. Their reason was at length awakened by the revolutionary fever having exhausted itself; humanity began to be felt at the ceaseless effusion of human blood, after all their enemies had been destroyed. The Convention eagerly embraced the same sentiments; their conspicuous situation rendered it probable, that they would be among the first victims, and every one, in the hope of saving his own life, ardently prayed for the downfall of the tyrants. But these expressions of public feeling only inspired their oppressors with greater impatience for human blood. "Let us put," said Vadier, "a wall of heads between the people and ourselves."—"The Revolutionary Tribunal," said Billaud Varennes, "thinks it has made a great effort when it strikes off seventy heads a-day; but the people are easily habituated to what they always behold; to inspire terror, we must double the number."—"How timid you are in the capital," said Collot d'Herbois; "can your ears not stand the sound of artillery? It is a proof of weakness to murder your enemies; you should mow them down with cannon." The Judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal, many of whom came from the galleys of Toulon, laboured incessantly at the work of extermination, and mingled indecent ribaldry and jests with their unrelenting cruelty to the crowds of captives who were brought before them. An old man, who had lost the use of speech by a paralytic affection, being placed at the bar, the president exclaimed—"No matter; it is not his tongue, but his head that we want."[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 53, 56. Th. vi. 370. Mig. ii. 327.

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The superstition or terrors of Robespierre furnished the first pretext for a combination to shake his power. The members of the different committees, alarmed for their own safety, were secretly endeavouring to undermine his influence, when the fanaticism of an old woman, named Catherine Theot, gave them the means of extending their apprehensions to a larger circle. She proclaimed herself the mother of God, and announced the approaching arrival of a regenerating Messiah. An ancient ally of Robespierre, Dom Gerle, was the associate of her frenzy; they held nocturnal orgies, in which Robespierre was invoked as the Supreme Pontiff. The Committee of Public Safety, who were acquainted with all their proceedings, beheld, or feigned to behold in these extravagancies, a design to make him the head of a new religion, which might add to the force of political power the weight of spiritual fervour. Vadier was intrusted by the Committee with the duty of investigating the mysteries; his report turned the fanatics into derision, but at the same time represented them as worthy of death, and they were accordingly thrown into prison. Robespierre strove to save them, but his colleagues withstood his influence; irritated, he retired from their meetings, and confined himself to the Club of the Jacobins, where his power was still predominant.[1]

Advantage first taken of the Superstition of Robespierre.

[1] Mig. ii. 328. Lac. xi. 59, 61. Th. vi. 336, 337, 356, 357.

Naturally suspicious, the apprehensions of the tyrant now increased to the highest degree. His house was guarded by a body of Jacobins, armed with pistols, chiefly composed of jurymen from the Revolutionary Tribunal. He never went out but attended by this obnoxious band. His table was covered by letters, in which he was styled "the Envoy of God," the "New Messiah," the "New Orpheus." On every side his portrait was to be seen in marble, bronze, or

Suspicions of Robespierre awakened.

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canvass, and below each, lines in which the Jacobinical poets extolled him above Cato and Aristides. But all his efforts, and all the adulation of his satellites, could not dispel the terrors which had seized his mind. On his desk, after his death, was found a letter, in the following terms:—"You yet live! assassin of your country, stained with the purest blood in France. I wait only the time when the people shall strike the hour of your fall. Should my hope prove vain, this hand which now writes thy sentence, this hand which presses thine with horror, shall pierce thee to the heart. Every day I am with thee; every hour my uplifted arm is ready to cut short thy life. Worst of men, live yet a few days to be tortured by the fear of my vengeance; this very night, in seeing thee, I shall enjoy thy terrors; but thy eyes shall seek in vain my avenging form."[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 328. Lac. xi. 63, 66.

Henriot and St Just urge vigorous Measures.

His violent partisans strongly urged the immediate adoption of the most vigorous measures. Henriot, and the Mayor of Paris, were ready to commence a new massacre, and had a body of three thousand young assassins, ready to aid those of September 2; St Just and Couthon were gained in the Committee of Public Safety; the President Dumas, and the Vice-President Coffinhal, were to be depended on in the Revolutionary Tribunal. "Strike soon and strongly," said St Just. "DARE! that is the sole secret of Revolutions."*

* The secret designs of Robespierre are clearly revealed in the following letter, written to him at this period by Payan, his creature in the Municipality of Paris. "The change, of all others most essential, is to augment the powers of the central government,—all our authority is useless; it is by augmenting the central power that alone any good can be done. Would you strike to the earth the refractory deputies, obtain great victories in the interior; bring forward a report which may strike at once against all the disaffected;—pass salutary decrees to restrain the journals; render all the public functionaries responsible to you alone: let them be incessantly occupied in centraliz-

They had already marked out Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Thuriot, Roverè, Lecombre, Panis, Monestier, Legendre, Freron, Barras, and Cambon, as the first victims. But the conspirators had no armed force at their command; the Club of the Jacobins, which they wielded at pleasure, was only powerful from its weight on public opinion; the Committees of Government were all arrayed on the other side. Robespierre, therefore, was compelled to commence the attack in the Convention; he expected to sway them by the terror of his voice; or if, contrary to all former precedent, they held out, his reliance was on the Municipality, and an insurrection of the people, similar to that which had been so successful on the 31st May. By their aid he hoped to effect the proscription of the Committee of Public Safety, and their associates in the Mountain, as he had formerly done that of the Girondists, and of the Committee of Twelve.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 329, 331. Lac. xi. 67, 69. Th. vi. 355, 409.

In a meeting of the Jacobins, held on the 3d Thermidor (21st July), he prepared the minds of the audience for a revolt against the Convention. "The Assembly," said he, "labouring under the gangrene of corruption, and unable to throw off its impurities, is incapable of saving the Republic; both will perish; the proscription of the patriots is the order of the day. For myself, I have one foot in the grave; in a few days I will place the other in it; the result is in the hands of Providence."[2] The Jacobins were by these and similar addresses prepared for a Revolutionary movement, but the secret of the insurrection, which

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Insurrection agreed on at the Jacobins.

[2] Mig. ii. 330. Lac. xi. 68. Th. vi. 411.

ing public opinion: hitherto your efforts have been confined to the centralizing of the physical government. I repeat it: you require a vast report, which may embrace at once all the conspirators, blend them all together; the Dantonists, the Royalists, the Orleanists, the Hebertists, the Lafayettists, the Bourdon de l'Oisists.—Commence the great work."—Hist. de la Conv. iv. 62, 63.

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was fixed for the 9th Thermidor, was confided only to Henriot and the Mayor of Paris.

The leaders of the Convention, and of the Committees on their side, were not idle. The immediate pressure of danger had united all parties against the tyrant. He made no secret in the popular society of his resolution to decimate the Assembly. At leaving one of the meetings where his designs had been openly expressed, Barrere exclaimed, "That Robespierre is insatiable; because we wont do every thing he wishes, he threatens to break with us. If he speaks to us of Thuriot, Guffroi, Roverè, and all the party of Danton, we understand him; even should he demand Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Legendre, Freron, we may consent in good time; but to ask Duval, Andoin, Leonard, Bourdon, Vadier, Vouland, is out of the question. To proscribe members of the Committee of General Safety, is to put the poniard to all our throats." Impressed with these feelings, they resolved to stand on their guard; though they did not venture to commence an attack on Robespierre, whose name was terrible, and influence still so much the object of dread. Tallien was the leader of the party, an intrepid man, and an old supporter of the Revolutionary tyranny, but who had been awakened, during his sanguinary mission to Bourdeaux, to better feelings, by the influence of a young woman, afterwards well known as Madame Tallien, of extraordinary beauty, and more than masculine firmness of character.[1]

Measures of the Convention to resist it.

[1] Mig. ii. 329. Lac. xi. 69, 70. Th. v. 410.

Contest begins in Assembly.

Robespierre's Speech.

At length, on the 8th Thermidor (26th July), the contest began in the National Convention. The discourse of Robespierre was dark and enigmatical: "I come," said he, "to defend your outraged authority, and violated independence; I also will defend myself; you will not be taken by surprise, for you have nothing

in common with the tyrants whom you combat. To what faction do I belong? To yourselves. What is the party, which ever since the commencement of the Revolution, has crushed faction, and swept off the traitors? It is yourselves, the people, the force of principles. That is my party. For six weeks I have been reduced to a state of impotence in the Committee of Public Safety; during that time has faction been better restrained, or the country more happy? Representatives of the people, the time has arrived when you should resume the attitude which befits you; you are not placed here to be governed, but to govern the depositaries of your confidence. Let it be spoken out at once; a conspiracy exists against the public freedom; it springs from a criminal intrigue in the bosom of the Convention; that intrigue is conducted by the members of the Committee of General Safety; the enemies of the Republic have contrived to array that Committee against the Committee of Public Safety; even some members of this latter Committee have been infected; and the coalition thus formed seeks to ruin the country. What is the remedy for the evil? To punish the traitors; to purge the Committees of their unworthy members; to place the Committee of General Safety under the control of that of Public Safety; to establish the unity of government under the auspices of the Convention; and thus to crush faction under the weight of the national representation, and raise on its ruins the power of justice and freedom."[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 334. Lac. xi. 77, 78. Th. vi. 419, 420.

This speech was received with breathless attention; not a sound was heard during its delivery; not a whisper of applause followed its close. At the proposal that it should be printed, the first symptoms of resistance began—Bourdon de l'Oise opposed its publication; but Barrere having supported it, the Assem-

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bly, fearful of committing itself, openly with its enemies, agreed to the proposal. The members of the Committee of General Safety seeing the majority wavering, deemed it now necessary to take decisive steps.

Cambon's Reply.

"It is no longer time," said Cambon, "for dissembling; one man paralyses the Assembly, and that man is Robespierre."—"We must pull the mask off any countenance on which it is placed," said Billaud Varennes, "I would rather that my carcass served for a throne to the tyrant, than render myself, by my silence, the accomplice of his crimes."—"It is not enough," said Vadier, "for him to be a tyrant; he aims farther, like a second Mahomet, at being proclaimed the envoy of God." Freron proposed to throw off the hated yoke of the Committees. "The moment is at last arrived," said he, "to revive the liberty of opinion; I propose that the Assembly reverse the decree which permitted the arrest of the representatives of the people; who can debate with freedom, when imprisonment is hanging over his head?" Some applause followed this proposal; but Robespierre was felt to be too powerful to be overthrown by the Convention, unaided by the Committees; this extreme measure therefore was rejected, and the Assembly contented itself with reversing the decree which ordered the publication of his address, and sent it to the Committees for examination. Robespierre retired, surprised at the resistance he had experienced, but still confident of success on the following day, from the insurrection of the Jacobins, and of the Municipality.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 334, 335. Lac. xi. 79, 80. Th. vi. 421–424.

Extraordinary Meeting at the Jacobins.

In the evening he repaired to the popular society, where he was received with enthusiasm. Henriot, Dumas, Coffinhal, and his other satellites surrounded him, and declared themselves ready for action. "I know," says Henriot, "the road to the Convention,

and I am ready to take it again."—"Go," said Robespierre, "separate the wicked from the weak; deliver the Assembly from the wretches who enthral it; render it the service which it expects from you, as you did on the 31st May and the 2d June. March! you may yet save liberty! After describing the attacks directed against his person, he added, "I am ready, if necessary, to drink the cup of Socrates."—"Robespierre," exclaimed one of the deputies, "I am ready to drink it with you; the enemies of Robespierre are those of the country; let them be named, and they shall cease to exist." During all the night he made arrangements for the disposal of his partisans on the following day. Their points of rendezvous were fixed at the hall of the Jacobins, and the Hotel de Ville, where they were to be in readiness to receive his orders from the National Assembly.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 336. Th. ii. 426, 427. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 39, 64.

Mutual Preparations.

The two Committees on their side were not idle. During the whole night they sat in deliberation. It was felt by every one that a combination of all parties was required to shake the redoubted power of Robespierre. All their efforts accordingly were directed to this object. St Just continued firm to his leader, but by unremitting exertions, the Jacobins of the Mountain succeeded in forming a coalition with the leaders of the Plain and of the Right. "Do not flatter yourselves," said Tallien to the Girondists, "that he will ever spare you; you have committed an unpardonable offence in being freemen. Let us bury our ruinous divisions in oblivion. You weep for Vergniaud; we weep for Danton; let us unite their shades by striking Robespierre." "Do you still live?" said he to the Jacobins; "has the tyrant spared you this night? yet your names are the foremost on the list of proscription. In a few days he will have your heads, if

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you do not take his. For two months you have shielded us from his strokes; you may now rely on our support as our gratitude." The friends of Danton were so exasperated at the death of their leader that they long resisted all advances towards a reconciliation; but at length moved by the entreaties of the Plain and the Right, they agreed to join the coalition. Before daybreak, all the Assembly had united for the overthrow of the tyrant.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 336. Lac. vi. 88-93. Th. vi. 430, 431.

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Meeting of the 9th Thermidor.

At an early hour on the morning of the 9th Thermidor (27th July), the benches of the Convention were thronged by its members; those of the Mountain were particularly remarkable for the serried ranks and determined looks of the coalition. The leaders walked about the passages, confirming each other in their generous resolution. Bourdon de l'Oise pressed Durand Maillane by the hand, Roverè and Tallien followed his example. The latter evinced that undoubting confidence which is so often the presage and cause of success. "Take your place, said he, looking around him; "I have come to witness the triumph of freedom; this evening Robespierre is no more." At noon St Just mounted the Tribune: Robespierre took his station on the bench directly opposite, to intimidate his adversaries by his look. His knees trembled, the colour fled from his lips as he ascended to his seat; the hostile appearance of the assembly already gave him an anticipation of his fate.[2]

[2] Lac. xi. 94. Mig. ii. 336, 337. Th. vi. 432. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 123.

St Just commenced a speech from the Tribune. "I belong," said he, "to no party; I will combat them all. The course of events has possibly determined that this Tribune should be the Tarpeian rock for him who now tells you that the members of the committees have strayed from the path of wisdom." Upon this he was violently interrupted by Tallien, who

took the lead in the revolt. "Shall the speaker," said he, "for ever arrogate to himself, with the tyrant of whom he is the satellite, the privilege of denouncing, accusing, and proscribing the members of the Assembly? Shall he for ever go on amusing us with imaginary perils, when real and pressing dangers are before our eyes? After the enigmatical expressions of the tyrant yesterday from that place, can we doubt what St Just is about to propose? You are about," said he, "to raise the veil; I will tear it asunder!" Loud applauses on all sides followed this exclamation. "Yes," exclaimed he, "I will tear it asunder; I will exhibit the danger in its full extent; the tyrant in his true colours. It is the whole Convention which he now proposes to destroy; he knows well, since his overthrow yesterday, that however much he may mutilate that great body, he will no longer find it the instrument of his tyrannical designs. He is resolved that no sanctuary should exist for freedom, no retreat for the friends of the Republic. He has in consequence resolved to destroy you all; yes, this very day, aye, in a few hours. Two thousand assassins have sworn to execute his designs; I myself last night heard their oaths, and fifty of my colleagues heard them with me. The massacre was to have commenced in the night with the Committees of Public Safety and of General Security, all of whom were to have been sacrificed except a few creatures of the tyrant; the fidelity of the soldiers, who feared the Convention, alone has preserved them from this terrible calamity. Let us instantly take measures commensurate to the magnitude of the danger; let us declare our sittings permanent, till the conspiracy is broken, and its chiefs arrested. I have no difficulty in naming them; I have followed their steps through their bloody con-

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Vehement Eloquence of Tallien.

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juration: I name Dumas, the atrocious President of the Revolutionary Tribunal; I name Henriot, the infamous commander of the National Guard." Here Billaud Varennes interrupted the orator, and gave some fuller details on the conspiracy which had been matured in the Society of the Jacobins, and denounced Robespierre as its chief. "The Assembly will perish," he concluded, "if it shows the least signs of weakness."—"We shall never perish," exclaimed the members rising in a transport of enthusiasm from their seats. Tallien resumed: "Can there be any doubt now about the reality of the conspiracy? have you conquered so many tyrants only to crouch beneath the yoke of the most atrocious of them all? The charge against Robespierre is already written in your hearts. Is there a voice among you which will declare that he is not an oppressor? If there is, let him stand forth, for him have I offended. Tremble, tyrant, tremble! see with what horror freemen shrink from your polluted touch. We enjoy your agony, but the public safety requires it should no longer be prolonged. I declare, if the National Convention hesitate to pass the decree of accusation, I will plunge this dagger in your bosom;" and he drew the glittering steel from his breast in the midst of the Assembly, which resounded with applause.[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 98, 99. Mig. ii. 338. Th. vi. 431—435.

Consternation of Robespierre.

During this impassioned harangue, which was pronounced with the most vehement action, Robespierre sat motionless with terror. The Convention, amidst a violent tumult, decreed the arrest of Henriot, Dumas, and his other associates; and their own permanence, and numerous measures of precaution, were suggested. But Tallien, who perceived that amidst these multifarious proposals the main object of destroying Robespierre was likely to be forgot, resumed his place in the Tribune. "Let us think only of

the tyrant; you have not a moment to lose, he is every hour collecting his strength. Why accumulate charges, when his conduct is engraven on every heart? Let him perish by the arm he has invented to destroy others. To what accused did *he* ever give the right of speaking in his defence? Let us say with the juries of the Revolutionary Tribunal, 'Our minds have long been made up.' If you declare him *hors la loi*, can he complain who has put *hors la loi* nine-tenths of France? Let there be no formalities with the accused; you cannot too much abridge their punishment; he has told you so himself a hundred times. Let us strike him in the bosom of the Assembly; let his associates perish with him on the bench of the Revolutionary Tribunal, in the Club of the Jacobins, at the head of the traitorous Municipality."[1]

[1] Lac. xi. 100—102. Mig. ii. 338, 339.

Robespierre tried in vain, during the tumult which followed this address, to obtain a hearing. The President, Thuriot, whom he had often threatened with death, constantly drowned his voice by ringing his bell. In vain he looked for support among the former satellites of his power; all frozen with terror shrunk from his gaze. *A bas le tyran!* resounded from all sides of the hall. In despair, he turned to the few survivors of the Girondists. "Retire from these benches," they exclaimed; "Vergniaud and Condorcet have sat here."—"Pure and virtuous citizens," said he, to the deputies on the right, "will you give me the liberty of speech, which the assassins refuse?" A profound silence followed the demand. "For the last time, President of assassins," said he, turning to the chair, "will you allow me to speak?" The continued noise drowned his voice. He then sunk on his seat pale and exhausted; his voice, which had become a shrill scream from agitation and vehemence,[2]

[2] Mig. ii. 339. Lac. xi. 103. Th vi. 437, 438. Toul. iv. 382.

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at length totally failed; foam issued from his mouth. "Wretch!" exclaimed a voice from the Mountain, "you are choked by the blood of Danton." "Ah! you would avenge Danton," rejoined Robespierre: "cowards, why did you not defend him." "Citizens," exclaimed Billaud Varennes, "liberty is about to be restored."—"Say rather," replied Robespierre, "that crime is about to triumph," as he left the hall with the other proscribed deputies.[1]

[1] Levasseur, iii. 147.

Robespierre, Couthon, St Just, and Henriot ordered to be Arrested.

The act of accusation was then carried amidst the most violent agitation. The younger brother of Robespierre had the generosity to insist that he should be included in the charge. "I am as culpable as my brother," said he; "I share his virtues, I am willing to share his fate." Le Bas followed his example. At length the two Robespierres, Le Bas, Couthon, St Just, Dumas, and Henriot, were unanimously put under arrest and sent to prison; and the Assembly broke up at five o'clock.[2]

[2] Mig. ii. 340. Lac. xi. 104. Toul. iv. 383.

During this stormy contest the partisans of Robespierre were collecting at the Hall of the Jacobins, and at the Hotel de Ville. They expected that he would be victorious in the Convention, and that the armed force would only be called on to support its decrees. Part of the National Guard were assembled at the rendezvous, when a messenger arrived from the Convention requiring the Mayor to appear at the bar, and give an account of the state of the capital. "Return to your associates," said Henriot, "and say that we are in deliberation here how to purify their ranks. Tell Robespierre to remain firm and fear nothing." At half-past four they received intelligence of the arrest of Robespierre and his accomplices, which soon circulated with the rapidity of lightning through Paris. Instantly they gave orders to sound the toc-

sin, close the barriers, convoke the General Council, and assemble the Sections. The Jacobins declared their sittings permanent, and the most rapid means of communication were established between these two great centres of the insurrection.[1]*

[1] Mig. ii. 340. Lac. xi. 105. 108. Th. vi. 443.

To excite the people to revolt, Henriot, with a drawn sabre in his hand, at the head of his staff, traversed the streets, exclaiming, "To arms to save the country!" —In his course through the Faubourg St Antoine, he met the procession of eighty prisoners proceeding as usual to execution: the crowd had stopped the chariots, and loudly demanded that they should be released: but he had the barbarity to order them to be led on, and they all suffered. On his return, two deputies of the Convention met him in the Rue St Honorè, and prevailed on some horsemen to obey the orders of the Convention, and arrest his person; he was handcuffed, and conducted to the Committee of General Safety. About the same time the national agent Payan was seized; the Convention seemed triumphant, its principal enemies were in confinement.[2]

[2] Lac. xi. 109. Toul. iv. 384, 385. Mig. ii. 341. Th. vi. 442, 443. Hist. de la Conv. vi. 164.

* The following proclamation was immediately issued from the Hotel de Ville. "Brothers and Friends, the country is in imminent danger: the wicked have mastered the Convention, where they hold in chains the virtuous Robespierre, who passed the decree so consoling to humanity on the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul: Couthon, that venerable citizen, who has but a heart and a head alive, though both are burning with patriotism: St Just, that virtuous apostle, who first checked treason in the army of the Rhine and the north: Le Bas, their worthy colleague; the younger Robespierre, so well known for his labours with the army of Italy: and who are their enemies? Collot d' Herbois, an old comedian, convicted under the old regime of having stolen the strong box of his troop of players: Bourdon de l'Oise, that perpetual calumniator of the Municipality of Paris: one Barrere, the ready tool of every faction which is uppermost: one Tallien, and Freron, intimate friends of the infamous Danton. To arms! To arms! let us not lose the fruit of the 18th August, and the 2d June. Death to the traitors."—Hist. de la Conv. iv. 160, 161.

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But the insurgents regained their advantage between six and seven o'clock, in consequence of the dispersion of the members of the Assembly, and the energetic measures of the Municipality. Robespierre had been sent to the Conciergerie, and the other conspirators to the different prisons in Paris. The magistrates sent detachments to deliver them; Robespierre was speedily brought in triumph to the Hotel de Ville, where he was received with the utmost enthusiasm, and soon joined by his brother and St Just. Coffinhal set off at the head of two hundred cannoneers to deliver Henriot; he arrived in the place de Carousel, and having forced the guard of the Convention, penetrated to the rooms of the Committee of General Safety, and delivered that important leader.[1]

Robespierre is imprisoned, but liberated.

[1] Mig. ii. 342. Th. iv. 445. Lac. xi. 109.

The Assembly met at seven o'clock. Intelligence was immediately brought of the fearful successes of the insurgents, their insurrectionary measures, the liberation of the Triumvirs, the assemblage at the Hotel de Ville, the convocation of Revolutionary Committees, and of the sections. In the midst of the alarm, the members of the two committees, driven from their offices, arrived in consternation with the account of the forcing of the Tuileries, the delivery of Henriot, and the presence of an armed force round the Convention. The agitation was at its height, when Amar entered and announced that the terrible cannoneers had pointed their guns against the walls of their hall. "Citizens," said the President, covering his face with his robe, "the hour is arrived to die at our posts."—"We are ready to die," exclaimed the members. Animated by a sublime resolution every one spontaneously resumed his seat, and the Assembly unanimously took the oath. The vociferous crowd in the gallery at the same time disappeared.[2]

[2] Lac. xi. 112. Mig. ii. 342. Th. vi. 446, 447. Toul. iv. 380—383, 386. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 179.

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In this extremity, Tallien and his friends acted with the firmness which in revolutions so often proves successful. "Every thing conspires," said he, "to assure the triumph of the Convention, and the liberty of France. By his revolt, Robespierre has opened to us the only path which is safe with tyrants. Thank Heaven, to deliver our country, we need not now await the uncertain decisions of a tribunal filled with his creatures. He has brought his fate upon himself; let us declare him *hors la loi* with all his accomplices; let us include the rebellious Municipality in the decree; let us besiege him in the centre of his power; let us instantly convoke the Sections, and allow the public horror to manifest itself by actions. Name a commander of the armed force; there must be no hesitation; in such a strife, he who assumes the offensive commands success." All these decrees were instantly passed; Henriot was declared *hors la loi*, and Barras named to the command of the military force; Freron, Bourdon de l'Oise, and other determined men, associated with him in the perilous duty. The Committee of Public Safety was now fixed on as the centre of operations; the générale beat, and emissaries were instantly despatched to all the Sections, to summon them to the defence of the Convention;[1] while a macer was despatched to summon the Municipality to the bar of the Assembly: but such was the arrogance of that body in the anticipation of immediate victory that they returned for answer, "Yes, we shall come to their bar: but at the head of the insurgent people."[2]

Firmness of Tallien and his Party.

[1] Toul. iv. 387. Th. vi. 447, 448. Lac. xi. 112, 113. Mig. ii. 342.

[2] Hist. de la Conv. iv. 177.

While the government were adopting these energetic measures, Henriot was haranguing the cannoneers in the Place de Carousel. The fate of France hung on their decision; could he have persuaded them to act,

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the Convention would have been destroyed before the tardy succours could arrive from the remote quarters of the capital. Happily they could not be brought to fire on the legislature, and their refusal decided the fortune of the day. Dispirited at this unwonted failure with the troops, and alarmed at the cries which broke from the multitude as soon as the decrees of the Assembly were known, he withdrew to the Hotel de Ville, the armed force followed his example, and the Convention, so recently besieged within its walls, speedily became the assailing party.[1]

The Cannoneers desert Henriot in the Place de Carousel.

[1] Lac. xi. 113. Toul. iv. 387, 388. Mig. ii. 343. Th. vi. 448.

Paris was soon in the most violent state of agitation. The tocsin summoned the citizens to the Hotel de Ville, the générale called them to the Convention, the Deputies of the Assembly, and the Commissioners of the Municipality, met in the Sections, and strove for the mastery in those important bodies. On all sides the people hastened to arms; the streets were filled by multitudes crowding to their different rallying points; cries of *Vive la Convention, Vive la Commune*, broke forth in the different columns, according to the prevailing opinion of their members; while the rolling of cannon and ammunition waggons by torch-light towards the Hotel de Ville, gave a fearful presage of the contest that was approaching.[2]

Dreadful agitation at Paris.

[2] Lac. xi. 115. Mig. ii. 343. Toul. iv. 388.

The emissaries of the Municipality first arrived at the rendezvous of the Sections; but the National Guard, distracted and uncertain, hesitated to obey the summons of the magistrates. They could only be brought, in the first instance, to send deputations to the Commune, to enquire into the state of affairs. Meanwhile, the news of Robespierre's arrest circulated with rapidity, and a ray of hope shot through the minds of numerous proscribed individuals, who were in concealment in the city. With trembling steps

they issued from their hiding-places, and approaching the columns of their fellow-citizens, besought them to assist in dethroning the tyrant. The minds of many were already shaken, those of all in a state of uncertainty, when, at ten o'clock, the Commissioners of the Convention arrived with the intelligence of their decrees, of the summons to assist them, of the appointment of a commander-in-chief, and of a rallying point, at the hall of the Assembly. Upon this they no longer hesitated; the battalions of the National Guard from all quarters marched towards the Convention, and defiled through the hall in the midst of the most enthusiastic applause. At midnight, above three thousand men had arrived. "The moments are precious," said Freron, "the time for action has come. Let us instantly march against the rebels; we will summon them in the name of the Assembly, to deliver up the traitors, and, if they refuse, we will lay the Hotel de Ville in ashes." "Depart" said Tallien, "and let the rising sun not shine on one of the conspirators in life." The order was promptly obeyed; a few battalions and pieces of artillery were left to guard the Assembly, and the remainder of the forces, under the command of Barras, marched at midnight against the insurgents. The night was dark, a feeble moonlight only shone through the gloom; but the forced illumination of the houses supplied a vivid light, which shone on the troops, who in profound silence, and in serried masses, marched from the Tuileries along the quays of the river, towards the Place de Grève, the head quarters of the insurgents.[1]

The Sections join the Convention.

[1] Mig. ii. 343, 344. Lac. xi. 114, 116. Toul. iv. 389. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 189, 190.

The tumult now became so violent, that, at length, the sound reached the prisons. The unhappy inmates of their gloomy cells, put their ears to the bars of the windows, listened to every sound, and yet trembled

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least the agitation should be the prelude to a general massacre of the captives. Soon, however, the downcast looks of the jailers, words whispered to the ears of the framers of the lists, and the consternation of these wretches, threw a ray of hope through their despairing minds. Shortly after, it was discovered, by half-suppressed words heard in the streets, that Robespierre was in danger; the relations of the captives placed themselves under the windows, and informed them by signs of what was passing, and then the exhilaration of the prisoners broke out into the most vehement and tumultuous joy.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 450, 451.

Preparations at the Hotel de Ville.

Meanwhile, the adherents of Robespierre, consisting almost entirely of the cannoneers, and of the armed force commanded by Henriot, who were composed of the very lowest of the rabble, had assembled in great force at the Hotel de Ville. The Place de Grève was filled with artillery, bayonets, and pikes; Robespierre had been received with the utmost enthusiasm, and the delivery of Henriot raised to the highest pitch the confidence of the conspirators. But as the night advanced, and no columns of the National Guard arrived, this confidence gave place to the most sinister presentiments. Even in the Fauxbourg St Antoine, the centre of all former insurrections, the delegates of the Municipality failed in rousing the populace. "What the better have we been," said they, "of all the insurrections? What has Robespierre done for us? Where are the riches, all the fields he promised us? When we are dying of famine, does he expect to satisfy us by the daily spectacle of an hundred aristocrats dying on the scaffold? Does he suppose we are cannibals, to feed on human flesh, and drink human blood? He has done nothing for us;[2] we will do nothing for him." Such was the language of the populace in the most

[2] Lac. xi. 114, 115. Mig. ii 344. Toul. iv. 389.

revolutionary quarter of Paris; the fever of innovation had exhausted itself; even the lowest of the people were dissatisfied with the rulers they had chosen for themselves.

The Cannoneers desert Robespierre, who is arrested.

At midnight the rumour began loudly to spread through the ranks of the insurgents, that the Municipality had been declared *hors la loi*, that the Sections had joined the Convention, and that their forces were advancing against the insurgents. To obviate its impression, Payan read aloud in the council-room the decree of the Convention, and inserted in it the names of all those of their party whom he observed in the gallery, hoping thereby to attach them from desperation to the cause of Robespierre; but an opposite effect immediately ensued, as they all instantly took to flight, leaving the gallery deserted. Nor did affairs wear a more promising aspect out of doors. There were about two thousand men stationed in the Place de Grève, with a powerful train of artillery; but their dispositions were already much shaken by the obvious defection of their fellow-citizens, when the light of the torches showed the heads of the columns of the National Guards appearing in all the avenues which led to the square. The moment was terrible; ten pieces of the artillery of the Convention were placed in battery, while the cannoneers of the Municipality, with their lighted matches in their hands, stood beside their guns on the opposite side. But the authority of the law prevailed; the decree of the Legislation was read by torchlight, and the insurgent troops refused to resist it.[1] Some emissaries of the Convention glided into the ranks of the Municipality, and raised the cry, *Vive la Convention*; the insurgents were moved by the harangue of Meda, the commander of the National Artillery, and, in a short time, the Place de

[1] Th. vi 482. Mig. ii. 344. Meda, Rev. Mem. xlii. 383. Hist. de la Conv. xv. 193.

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Grève was deserted, and the whole cannoneers retired to their homes, or ranged themselves on the side of the Assembly.

Henriot descended the stair of the Hotel de Ville, but seeing the square deserted, he vented his execrations on his faithless followers, who had, for the most part, abandoned the King in the same manner on the 10th August, and hastened back to his comrades. The conspirators finding themselves unsupported, gave themselves up to despair; the National Guard rushed rapidly up the stair, and entered the room where Robespierre and the leaders of the revolt were assembled. Robespierre was sitting with his elbow on his knees, and his head resting on his hand; Meda discharged his pistol, which broke his under jaw, and he fell under the table. St Just implored Le Bas to put an end to his life. "Coward, follow my example," said he, and blew out his brains. Couthon was seized under a table, feebly attempting to strike with a knife, which he wanted the courage to plunge in his heart; Coffinhal, and the younger Robespierre, threw themselves from the windows, and were seized in the inner court of the building. Henriot had been thrown down the stair by Coffinhal, but though bruised and mutilated, he contrived to crawl into the entrance of a sewer, from whence he was dragged out by the troops of the Convention.[1]*

[1] Lac. xi. 117. Mig. ii. 345. Th. vi. 454–455. Meda, Rev. Mem. xlii. 385. Levasseur, iii. 154. Toul. iv. 390.

Dreadful Scene at his Seizure.

Robespierre and Couthon being supposed to be dead, were dragged by the heels to the Quai Pelletier, where it was proposed to throw them into the river;

* Many authors affirm that Robespierre shot himself. That he had a pistol in his hand is certain; but Levasseur de la Sarthe and Meda, the gendarmes who arrested him, agree in stating that his jaw was broken by a shot fired by the last of these parties.—See Levasseur, iii. 154, Med. 385.

but it being discovered, when day returned, that they still breathed, they were stretched on a board, and carried to the Assembly. The members having refused to admit them, they were conveyed to the Committee of General Safety, where Robespierre lay for nine hours, stretched on a table, the same with that where he had signed the death-warrant of so many noble citizens, with his broken jaw still bleeding, and suffering alike under bodily pain, and the execrations and insults of those around him. During the whole time that this cruel torture lasted, he evinced a stoical apathy; foam merely issued from his mouth, which the humanity of some around him led them to wipe off; but his finger, still with convulsive energy, was fixed on the holster of the pistol which he had not had the courage to discharge.[1] From thence, he was sent to the Conciergerie, where he was confined in the same cell which had been occupied by Danton, Hebert, and Chaumette. At length he was brought, with all his associates, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and as soon as the identity of their persons was established, they were condemned.[2]

[1] Hist. de la Conv. iv. 203. Levass. iii. 155.

[2] Riouffe, 70. Mem. xxiii. 70. Mig ii. 345. Meda, Rev. Mem. xlii. 386. Th. vi. 456. Lac. xi. 118, 119.

At four in the morning, on the 29th July, all Paris was in motion to witness the death of the tyrant. He was placed on the chariot, between Henriot and Couthon, whose remains were as mutilated as his own; the crowd, which for long had ceased to attend the executions, manifested the utmost joy at their fate. He was conducted to the Place de la Revolution; the scaffold was placed on the spot where Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette had suffered. The blood from his jaw burst through the bandage, and overflowed his dress; his face was ghastly pale. He shut his eyes, but could not close his ears against the imprecations of the multitude. A woman breaking from the crowd,

Executed with St Just, Henriot, Couthon, and all their Party.

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exclaimed—"Murderers of all my kindred, your agony fills me with joy; descend to hell, covered with the curses of every mother in France!" Twenty of his comrades were executed before him; when he ascended the scaffold, the executioner tore the bandage from his face; the lower jaw fell upon his breast, and he uttered a yell, which filled every heart with horror. For some minutes the frightful figure was held up to the multitude; he was then placed under the axe, and the last sounds which reached his ears were the exulting shouts, which were prolonged for some minutes after his death.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 346. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 213. Toul. iv. 391. Th. vi. 457. Lac. xi. 120. Levas.

Along with Robespierre were executed, Henriot, Couthon, St Just, Dumas, Coffinhal, Simon, and all the leaders of the revolt. St Just alone displayed the firmness, which had so often been witnessed among the victims whom they had sent to the scaffold. Couthon wept with terror; the others died uttering blasphemies, which were drowned in the cheers of the people. They shed tears for joy, they embraced each other in transport, they crowded round the scaffold to behold the bloody remains of the tyrants. "Yes, Robespierre, there is a God!" said a poor man as he approached the lifeless body of one so lately the object of dread; his fall was felt by all present as an immediate manifestation of the Divinity.[2]

[2] Lac. xi. 120. Mig. ii. 346. Th. vi. 457.

Reflections on the Reign of Terror;

Thus terminated the Reign of Terror, a period fraught with greater political instruction than any of equal duration which has existed since the beginning of the world. In no former period had the efforts of the people so completely triumphed, or the higher orders been so thoroughly crushed by the lower. The throne had been overturned, the altar destroyed; the aristocracy levelled with the dust, the nobles were in exile, the clergy in captivity, the gentry in affliction.

A merciless sword had waved over the state, destroying alike the dignity of rank, the splendour of talent, and the graces of beauty. All that excelled the labouring classes in situation, fortune, or acquirement, had been removed; they had triumphed over their oppressors, seized their possessions, and risen into their stations. And what was the consequence? The establishment of a more cruel and revolting tyranny than any which mankind had yet witnessed; the destruction of all the charities and enjoyments of life; the dreadful spectacle of streams of blood flowing through every part of France. The earliest friends, the warmest advocates, the firmest supporters of the people, were swept off indiscriminately with their bitterest enemies; in the unequal struggle, virtue and philanthropy sunk under ambition and violence, and society returned to a state of chaos, when all the elements of private or public happiness were scattered to the winds. Such are the results of unchaining the passions of the multitude; such the peril of suddenly admitting the light upon a benighted people.* With the prodigious Number of its victims.

* The extent to which blood was shed in France during this melancholy period, will hardly be credited by future ages. The Republican Prudhomme, whose prepossessions led him to any thing rather than an exaggeration of the horrors of the popular party, has given the following appalling account of the victims of the Revolution:—

Nobles,	1,278	
Noble women,	750	
Wives of labourers and artisans,	1,467	
Religieuses,	350	
Priests,	1,135	
Common persons, not noble,	13,623	
Guillotined by sentence of the Revolutionary Tribunal,	18,603	18,603
Women died of premature child-birth,		3,400
In child-birth from grief,		348
Women killed in La Vendée,		15,000
Children killed in La Vendée,		22,000

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The facility with which a faction, composed of a few of the most audacious and reckless of the nation, triumphed over the immense majority of all the holders of property in the kingdom, and led them forth like victims to the sacrifice, is not the least extraordinary or memorable part of that eventful period. The active part of the bloody faction at Paris never exceeded a few hundred men; their talents were by no means of the highest order, nor their weight in society considerable; yet they trampled under foot all the influential classes, ruled mighty armies with absolute sway, kept 200,000 of their fellow-citizens in

	Men slain in La Vendée,		900,000
	Victims under Carrier at Nantes,		32,000
Of whom were,	Children shot,	500	
	Children drowned,	1,500	
	Women shot,	264	
	Women drowned,	500	
	Priests shot,	300	
	Priests drowned,	460	
	Nobles drowned,	1,400	
	Artisans drowned,	5,300	
	Victims at Lyons,		31,000
	Total,		1,022351

[1] Prudhomme, Vict. de la Rev. Chateaub. Etud. Hist. Pr. 96, 97.

In this enumeration are not comprehended the massacres at Versailles, at the Abbey, the Carmes, or other prisons on September 2, the victims of the Glaciere of Avignon, those shot at Toulon and Marseilles, or the persons slain in the little town of Bedoin, of which the whole population perished.[1]

It is in an especial manner remarkable in this dismal catalogue, how large a proportion of the victims of the Revolution were persons in the middling and lower ranks of life. The priests and nobles guillotined are only 2413, while the persons of plebeian origin exceed 13,000! The nobles and priests put to death at Nantes were only 2160; while the infants drowned and shot are 2000, the women 764, and the artisans 5300! So rapidly in revolutionary convulsions does the career of cruelty reach the lower orders, and so wide spread is the carnage dealt out to them, compared with that which they have sought to inflict on their superiors.

captivity, and daily led out several hundred persons, of the best blood in France, to execution. Such is the effect of the unity of action which atrocious wickedness produces; such the consequence of rousing the cupidity of the lower orders; such the ascendency which in periods of anarchy is acquired by the most savage and lawless of the people. The peaceable and inoffensive citizens lived and wept in silence; terror crushed every attempt at combination; the extremity of grief subdued even the firmest hearts. In despair at effecting any change in the general sufferings, apathy universally prevailed, the people sought to bury their sorrows in the delirium of present enjoyments, and the theatres were never fuller than during the whole duration of the Reign of Terror.[1] Ignorance of human nature can alone lead us to ascribe this to any peculiarity in the French character; the same effects have been observed in all parts and ages of the world, as invariably attending a state of extreme and long-continued distress.

[1] Louvet, 124, 125. Mercier Tableau de Paris.

How, then, did a faction, whose leaders were so extremely contemptible in point of numbers, obtain the power to rule France with such absolute sway? The answer is simple. It was by an expedient of the plainest kind, and by steadily following out one principle so obvious that few have sought for the cause of such terrible phenomena in its application. This was by promoting, and to a great extent actually giving, to the working-classes the influence and the possessions of all the other orders in the state. *Egestas cupida novarum rerum*, was the maxim on which they acted; it was to this point, the cupidity and ambition of those to whom fortune had proved adverse, that all their measures were directed. Their principle was to keep the revolutionary passions of the people con-

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stantly awake by the display of fresh objects of desire; to represent all the present misery which the system of innovation had occasioned, as the consequence of the resistance which the holders of property had opposed to its progress; and to dazzle the populace by the prospect of boundless felicity, when the revolutionary equality and spoliation for which they contended, was fully established. By this means, they effectually secured, over the greater part of France, the co-operation of the multitude; and it was by their physical strength, guided and called forth by the revolutionary clubs and committees universally established, and everywhere composed of the most ardent of the Jacobin faction, that their extraordinary power was supported. This system succeeded perfectly as long as the victims of spoliation were the higher orders and considerable holders of property; it was when they were exhausted, and the edge of the guillotine began to descend upon the shopkeepers and the more opulent of the labouring classes, that the *general* reaction took place which overturned the reign of terror. When society is in so corrupt and profligate a form, that a faction, qualified by their talents and energy to take the lead in public affairs, can be found who will carry on the government on their principles, and they are not crushed in the outset by an united effort of all the holders of property, it can hardly fail of obtaining temporary success. It is well that the friends of order of every political persuasion, and they are to be found as much among the supporters of rational freedom as the advocates of monarchical power, should be aware of the deadly weapon which is in the possession of their adversaries, and the necessity of uniting to wrest it from their hands the moment that it is unsheathed: and it would be fortunate if the agents of revolution would

contemplate, in the Reign of Terror and the fate of Robespierre, the necessary effects of using it to their country and themselves.

There is no character, however, which has not some redeeming points: pure unmixed wickedness is the creation of romance, but never yet appeared in real life. Even the Jacobins of Paris were not destitute of good qualities; history would deviate equally from its first duty, and its chief usefulness, if it did not bring them prominently forward. With the exception of some atrocious characters, such as Collot d'Herbois, Fouché, Carrièr, and a few others, who were almost entirely guided by base and selfish motives: they were in general men possessed of some qualities, in which the seeds of a noble character are to be found. In moral courage, energy of character, and decision of conduct, they yielded to none in ancient or modern times: their heroic resolution to maintain amidst unexampled perils, the independence of their country, was worthy of the best days of Roman patriotism. If this noble desire could be separated from the obvious necessity of repelling the Allies to avoid punishment for the numberless crimes which they had committed, it would be deserving of the highest admiration: mingled as it necessarily was in their case, with a large portion of that baser alloy, it is still a redeeming point in their character. Some of them, doubtless, were selfish or rapacious, and used their power for the purposes of individual lust, or private emolument; but others, among whom we must number Robespierre and St Just, were entirely free from that degrading contamination, and in the atrocities they committed, were governed, if not by public principle, at least by private ambition. Even the blood which they shed was often the result, in their estimation, not so much of

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terror or danger as of overbearing necessity: they deemed it essential to the success of freedom; and regarded the victims who perished under the guillotine, as the melancholy sacrifice which required to be laid on its altars. In arriving at this frightful conclusion, they were, doubtless, mainly influenced by the perils of their own situation; they massacred others because they were conscious that death, if vanquished, justly awaited themselves, but still the weakness of humanity in their, as in many similar cases, deluded them by the magic of words, or the supposed influence of purer motives, and led them to commit the greatest crimes, while constantly professing the noblest intentions. There is nothing surprising or incredible in this: we have only to recollect, that all France joined in a crusade against the Albigiois, and that its bravest warriors deemed themselves secure from eternal, by consigning thousands of wretches to temporal flames: we have only to go back in imagination to Godfrey of Bouillon and the Christian warriors putting forty thousand unresisting citizens to death on the storming of Jerusalem, and wading to the Holy Sepulchre ankle-deep in human gore, to be convinced that such delusions are not peculiar to any particular age or country, but that they are the universal offspring of fanaticism, whether in political or religious contests. The writers who represent the Jacobins as mere blood-thirsty wretches, vultures, insatiate in their passion for destruction, are well-meaning and amiable, but weak and ignorant men; unacquainted with the real working of delusion or wickedness in the human heart, and calculated to mislead, rather than direct, future ages on the approach of times similar to that in which they obtained their ascendency. Vice never appears in such colours: it invariably conceals its real deformity. If other

states are ever to be ruled by a Jacobin faction, the advent of their power will not be marked by sanguinary professions, or the hideous display of heartless atrocity; it will be ushered in by the warmest expressions of philanthropy, by boundless hopes of felicity, and professions of the utmost regard for the great principles of public justice and general happiness. * [1]

[1] Levasseur de la Sarthe, Vol. i. 24, 80. iii. 164, 226.

* The ablest and most interesting apology for the Jacobins is to be found in the Memoirs of Levasseur de la Sarthe, himself no inconsiderable actor in their sanguinary deeds. It is highly satisfactory to have such a work to do justice to their intentions: and it is a favourable symptom of the love of impartiality in the human heart that even Robespierre and St Just have had their defenders. Napoleon was of opinion, that the character of the former of these men had been too severely handled by subsequent writers. "He was of opinion," says Las Cases, "that Robespierre had neither talent, nor force, nor system; that he was the true emissary of the Revolution, who was sacrificed the moment that he strove to arrest it in its course: the fate of all those who before himself had engaged in the attempt, but that he was by no means the monster that was commonly believed. "Robespierre," said he, "was at last desirous to stop the public executions. He had not been at the Committees for six weeks before his fall; and in his letters to his brother, who was attached to the army at Nice, which I myself saw, he deplored the atrocities which were going forward, and ruining the Revolution by the pity which they excited. Cambaceres, who is to be regarded as an authority for that epoch, said to me in relation to the condemnation of Robespierre: 'Sire, that was a case in which judgment was pronounced without hearing the accused.' 'You may add to that, that his intentions were different from what is generally supposed: He had a plan, after having overturned the furious factions whom he required to combat, to have returned to a system of order and moderation." "Some time before his fall," said Cambaceres, "he pronounced a discourse on that subject, full of the greatest beauties: it was not permitted to be inserted in the Moniteur, and all traces of it have, in consequence, been lost."—Las Cases, i. 366. Levasseur de la Sarthe, also strenuously supports the same opinion: maintaining that Robespierre was cut off just at the moment when he was preparing a return to a system of humanity and beneficence.—Levasseur, iv. 110, 111. If this be true, it only augments the weight of the moral lesson to be derived from their history, that, even by such men, a return to order and justice was felt to be indispensable.

Whatever opinions may be entertained on this point, one thing seems very clear, that Robespierre's abilities were of the highest order, and that the contrary opinions expressed by so many of his contemporaries were

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There is no opinion more frequently stated by the annalists and historians of the Revolution on the popular side in France, than that the march of the Revolution was inevitable: that an invincible fatality attends all such convulsions; and that by no human exertions could its progress have been changed, or its horrors averted. The able works of Thiers, Mignet, and many others, are mainly directed to this end; and it constitutes, in their estimation, the best apology of the Revolution. Never was an opinion more erroneous. There is nothing in the annals of human affairs which warrants the conclusion, that improvement necessarily leads to revolution; and that in revolution, a succession of rulers, each more sanguinary and atrocious than the preceding, must be endured before the order of society is restored. It is not the career of reform, it is the career of guilt which leads to these consequences; this deplorable succession took place in France, not because changes were made, but because boundless crimes in the course of these changes were committed. The partisans of liberal institutions have fallen into a capital error, when, in their anxiety to exculpate the actors in the Revolution, they have laid its horrors on the cause of the Revolution itself; to do so, was to brand the cause of freedom with infamy, when it should have been confined to its wicked supporters. It was the early commission of crime by the leaders of the Revolution which precipitated and rendered irretrievable its subsequent scenes; the career

suggested by envy or horror. It is impossible in any other way to account for his long dominion over France, at a period when talent of every sort was hurled forth in wild confusion to the great central arena at Paris. His speeches are a sufficient indication of the vigour of his mind; they are distinguished in many instances by a nervous eloquence, a fearless energy, a simple and manly cast of thought, very different from most of the frothy declamations at the Tribune.

of passion in nations is precisely similar to its excesses in individuals, and subject to the same moral laws. If we would seek the key to the frightful aberrations of the Revolution, we have only to turn to the exposition by the great English divines, of the career of guilty designs in the individual; the description of the one might pass for a faithful portrait of the other.* There is a necessity to which both are subjected; but it is not a blind fatality or a necessary connection between change and convulsion, but the moral law of nature, that vice, whether in nations or private men, is made

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* Take, for example, the following passage from Archbishop Tillotson:—"All vice stands upon a precipice; to engage in any sinful course is to run down the hill. If we once let loose the propensities of our nature, we cannot gather in the reins and govern them as we please; it is much easier not to begin a bad course, than to stop it when begun. 'Tis a good thing for a man to think to set bounds to himself in any thing that is bad; to resolve to sin in number, weight, and measure, with great temperance and discretion; that he will commit this sin, and then give over; entertain but this one temptation, and after that, shut the door and admit no more. Our corrupt hearts, when they are once set in motion, are like the raging sea, to which we can set no bounds, nor say to it, Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther. Sin is very cunning and deceitful, and does strangely gain upon men when once they give way to it. It is of a very bewitching nature, and hath strange arts of address and insinuation. The giving way to a small sin does marvellously prepare and dispose a man for a greater. By giving way to one little vice after another, the strongest resolution may be broken. 'Tis scarce imaginable of what force a single bad action is to produce more: for sin is very teeming and fruitful, and though there be no blessing annexed to it, yet it does strangely increase and multiply. As there is a connection of one virtue with another, so vices are linked together, and one sin draws many after it. When the devil tempts a man to commit any wickedness, he does, as it were, lay a long train of sins, and if the first temptation take, they give fire to another. Let us then resist *the beginnings of sin:* because we have then most power and sin least."—Tillotson, Serm. x. Works, i. 91, fol. ed.—This might stand for a graphic picture of the downward progress of the revolutionary passion in nations: philosophy will strive in vain to give so clear an elucidation of the causes which render it, when once thoroughly awakened, so destructive in its career.

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to work out its deserved punishment in the efforts which it makes for its own gratification.

1794. The death of Hebert and the anarchists was that of guilty depravity; that of Robespierre and the Decemvirs, of sanguinary fanaticism; that of Danton and his confederates, of stoical infidelity; that of Madame Roland and the Girondists, of reckless ambition and deluded virtue; that of Louis and his family, of religious forgiveness. The moralist will contrast the different effects of virtue and wickedness in the last moments of life; the Christian will mark with thankfulness the superiority in the supreme hour, to the sublimest efforts of human virtue, which was evinced by the believers in his own faith.

CHAPTER XV.

INTERNAL STATE OF FRANCE DURING THE REIGN OF TERROR.

ARGUMENT.

Vast Exertions of the French Government during the Reign of Terror—Its enormous Expenditure—Prodigious Issue of Assignats: its Effects—Their rapid Depreciation—Origin of the Law of the Maximum on Prices—Great increase of Disorders and Gambling from the rapid changes of Prices—Forced Requisitions of Grain, Horses, and Carriages—Public Robbery for support of Populace of Cities—The immense Burden it imposed on the State—Forced Loans from the Opulent Classes—Confusion of the old and Revolutionary Debt—Continued Fall of the Assignats—Severe Laws against Forestallers and all Public Companies—Direful effects of these Laws—Excessive Violence of the People from the Rise of Prices—Renewed Measures of Severity by the Municipality—And of the Convention—Establishment of the Committee of Subsistence—Equalization of Weights and Measures, and Decimal Notation—Sunday abolished—The Decade Established—Absolute Powers of the Committee of Public Safety—Grinding oppression on the Poor—Their Destitute and Deplorable Condition—People of Paris put on Reduced Rations—Fresh Arbitrary Taxation of the Opulent—Conversion of the Life into perpetual Annuitants—Reflections on the successive Destruction of all Classes by the Revolution—But it necessarily results from the Developement of the Revolutionary Passion—Successive steps of its disastrous progress; irresistible Power which made the one lead to the other—Great Effect of these Changes on the Distribution of the Landed Property of France—Its Effect on Population.

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THE internal and financial situation of France, during, and subsequent to the Reign of Terror, is equally instructive as to the inevitable consequence of revolutions, and the causes of the military events which subsequently occurred.

Nothing could have enabled the French government to make head against the difficulties of their situation, and the formidable attack of the European

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powers in 1793, but the immense levy of 1,500,000 men which then took place, the confiscation of half the landed property in the kingdom, and the unbounded issue of assignats on the security of the national domains. These great measures, which no government could have attempted, but during the fervour of a revolution, mutually upheld each other; and perpetuated the revolutionary system by the important interests which were made to depend on its continuance. The immense levy of soldiers drew off almost all the ardent and energetic spirits, and not only furnished bread to the multitudes whom the closing of all pacific employments had deprived of subsistence, but let off in immense channels the inflamed and diseased blood of the nation; the confiscation of the land placed funds worth above L. 700,000,000 sterling at the disposal of the government, which they were enabled to squander with boundless profusion in the maintenance of the revolutionary *régime* at home, and the contest with its enemies abroad; the extraordinary issue of paper to the amount ultimately of L. 350,000,000, which always enabled the Treasury to liquidate its demands, and interested every holder of property in the kingdom in the support of the national domains, the only security on which it rested. During the unparalleled and almost demoniac energy produced by the sudden operation of these powerful causes, France was unconquerable; and it was their combined operation which brought it triumphant through that violent and unprecedented crisis.[1]

Vast Exertions of the French Government during the Reign of Terror.

[1] Toul. v. 194. Th. vii. 239.

Europe has had too much reason to become acquainted with the military power developed by France during this eventful period; but the civil force, exerted by the dictators within their own dominions, though less generally known, was, perhaps, still more remark-

Its Enormous Expenditure.

able. Fifty thousand Revolutionary Committees were soon established in the republic, and embraced above 500,000 members, all the most resolute and determined of the Jacobin party. Each of these individuals received three francs a-day as his wages for seeking out victims for arrest and the scaffold; and their annual charge was 591,000,000 of francs, or L.24,000,000 sterling.[1] Between the military defenders and civil servants of the government, almost all the active and resolute men in France were in the pay of the dictators; and the whole starving energy of the country fed on the spoils of its defenceless opulence; —a terrible system, drawing after it the total dissolution of society; capable of being executed only by the most audacious wickedness; but never likely when it is attempted, of failing for a time at least of success.

[1] Chateaub. Etud. Hist. Preface, 97, 98.

"When a native of Louisiana," says Montesquieu, "wishes to obtain the fruit of a tree, he lays the axe to its root: behold the emblem of despotism!" He little imagined how soon his own country was to afford a signal example of this truth. This system of revolutionary activity and plunder, produced astonishing effects for a limited period, just as an individual who, in a few years, squanders a great fortune, outshines all those who live only on the fruits of their industry. But the inevitable period of weakness soon arrives; the maniac who exerts demoniac strength, cannot in the end withstand the steady efforts of intelligence; the career of extravagance is in general short; bankruptcy arrests alike the waste of improvidence, and the splendour which attends it.

Prodigious issue of Assignats. Its Effects.

Cambon, the minister of finance, soon after the fall of Robespierre, made an important and astonishing revelation of the length to which the emission of assignats had been carried under the Reign of Terror.

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The national expenses had exceeded three hundred millions of francs, or above L. 12,000,000 a-month; the receipts of the treasury during the disorder which prevailed, never exceeded a fourth part of that sum; and there was no mode of supplying the deficiency but by an incessant issue of paper money. The quantity in circulation at the fall of Robespierre amounted to six milliards, four hundred millions,—about L. 300,000,000 sterling; while the national domains were still worth twelve milliards, or above L. 520,000,000 sterling.[1] But this astonishing issue of paper could not continue, without introducing a total confusion of property of every sort. All the persons employed by government, both in the civil and military departments, were paid in the paper currency at par; but as it rapidly fell, from the enormous quantity in circulation, to a tenth part, and soon a twentieth of its real value, the pay received was merely nominal, and those in the receipt of the largest apparent incomes were in want of the common necessaries of life. Pichegru, at the head of the army of the north, with a nominal pay of four thousand francs, was only in the actual receipt on the Rhine, in 1795, of two hundred francs, or L. 8 sterling a-month in gold or silver; a smaller sum than is the pay of an English lieutenant: and Hoche, the commander of 100,000 men, the army of La Vendée, besought the government to send him a horse, as he was unable to purchase one, and the military requisitions had exhausted all those in the country where he commanded. If such was the condition of the superior, it may be imagined what was the situation of the inferior officers, and private soldiers; while in their own country they were literally starving; and the necessity of conquest was felt as strongly, to enable them to live[2]

[1] Report of Cambon. Th. vii. 134.

[2] Th. viii. 103, 115, 446.

on the spoils of their enemies, as to avert the sword of desolation from the frontiers of France.

This constant and increasing depreciation of the assignats produced its natural and unavoidable effect in a great enhancement of the price of provisions, and all the articles of human consumption. The assignats were not absorbed in the purchase of the national domains, because the holders were distrustful of the security of the revolutionary title, which they could alone receive, as their issue continued at the rate of L. 10,000,000 sterling a-month; of course the market became gorged, and the value of the assignats rapidly declined. Though this depreciation was unavoidable, the Convention endeavoured to arrest it, and enacted the punishment of six years of irons against any who should exchange any quantity of silver or gold for a greater nominal value of assignats; or should ask a larger price for any articles of merchandize, if the price was paid in paper, than if paid in the precious metals. It is needless to say that this forced attempt to sustain the value of the assignats was totally nugatory; and the consequences soon became fatal to many classes of persons. Debtors of every description hastened to discharge their obligations; and the creditors, compelled to accept paper at par, which was not worth a fifth or a tenth, at last not an hundredth, of its nominal value, were defrauded of the greater part of their property. The working classes, whose wages, in consequence of the general stagnation of industry, had by no means risen in proportion to this fall in the value of the assignats, found themselves miserably off for the necessaries of life; while the farmers, raising the price of their provisions, in proportion to the fall in the value of paper, soon elevated them beyond the reach of the labouring

Their rapid Depreciation.

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poor. This state of things, so opposite to what they had been led to expect as the result of a revolution, excited the most vehement discontent among the working classes; they ascribed it all, as is always the case, to the efforts of forestallers, and demanded with loud cries that they should be led out to the guillotine.[1]

[1] Th. v. 147, 149.

It became then absolutely necessary to have recourse to a *maximum:* powerful as the Committee of Public Safety was, a longer continuance of the public discontents would have endangered its existence.

Origin of the Law of the Maximum on Prices.

Corn was indeed not awanting, but the farmers, dreading the tumult and violence of the markets, and unwilling to part with their produce at the nominal value of the assignats, refused to bring it to the towns. To such a pitch did this evil arise in the beginning of May 1793, that the Convention were forced to issue a decree, compelling the farmers and grain-merchants to declare what stock they had in their possession, and to bring it to the public markets at a price fixed by each commune. Domiciliary visits were authorized, to inspect the stock of each holder of grain, and false returns punished by a forfeiture of the whole. In addition to this, the distribution of bread by the bakers was provided for in the most minute manner; no one could obtain bread without producing a *carte de sureté*, issued by the Revolutionary Committees; and on that *carte* was inscribed the number of his family, and the quantity to be delivered to each member. Finally, to put an end to the scandalous scenes which generally took place at the bakers' doors, it was enacted, that each bread shop should have a rope attached to it; each person, as he arrived, was obliged to take it in his hand, and remain quietly there till all before him were served. But in the struggles of discontent and famine, the cord was frequently broken;

May 4, 1793.

fierce conflicts ensued, and nothing but a prompt interposition of military force was able to restore tranquillity.[1] To such minute and vexatious regulations are governments reduced when they once violate the freedom of human action; and to such a load of fetters do the people subject themselves when they abandon themselves to the insane passion for democratic power.

[1] Th. v. 151.

Great increase of Disorders and Gambling from the rapid change of Prices.

All the other articles of life besides corn speedily rose with the increased issue of the assignats, and the people persisted in ascribing to forestallers the natural consequences of a depreciated circulation. Frightful tumults arose; the boats which descended the Seine with groceries, fruits, and wood, were seized and plundered; by the advice of Marat, they on one occasion rose and plundered all the confectioners' shops. Terrified at the continual recurrence of these disorders, the capitalists declined investing their money in purchases of any sort; and the shares in foreign mercantile companies rose rapidly from the increased demand for them, as the only investment affording a tolerable degree of security:[2]—another striking proof of the consequences of the disorders consequent on popular ambition, and their tendency to turn from the people the reservoirs by which their industry is maintained.

[2] Th. v. 152. 156.

During the perils and chances of a revolution, the tendency to gambling of every sort prodigiously increased. Men who had the sword of Damocles continually suspended over their heads, sought to make the most of the numerous chances of making money, which the rapid rise and fall of the assignats, and the boundless profusion of articles of luxury brought into the market by the ruin of their owners, naturally occasioned. The Bourse of Paris was crowded with

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bankers, revolutionists, ci-devant priests, ruined nobles, and adventurers of every description, who sometimes made enormous gains, and passed a life of debauchery with actresses, opera dancers, and abandoned women of every description, whom the dissolution of society had brought in contact with those who had risen for the moment on the wheels of fortune. Such was the universal dissolution of manners, arising from the dread of popular jealousy, that almost all the members of the Convention lived publicly with mistresses, who became possessed of much of the influence in the state. To have done otherwise would have exposed them to the blasting suspicion of their being Christians and Royalists.[1]

[1] Th. v. 161. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 81, 82.

Forced Requisitions.

The forced requisitions of horses, ammunition, provisions, and stores of every sort from the people, soon proved the source of infinite and most vexatious burdens. In August 1793, eighteen commissioners were nominated by the Convention, with powers to require from the primary assemblies in every part of France, unlimited supplies of men, horses, provisions, and ammunition. The principle founded on was, that the men and animals, indispensable for the purposes of agriculture, should alone be preserved, and that all the remainder might be seized for the purposes of the republic. All the horses of draught and burden, not absolutely required by the cultivators or manufacturers, were seized for the State; all the arms of every description, appropriated by the government Commissioners; the great hotels of the emigrants confiscated to the use of the State, converted into vast workshops for the manufacture of arms, clothing, or equipment for the armies, or magazines for the storing of subsistence for the use of the people. The principal manufactory of arms was established at Paris, and the whole

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workmen in iron and jewellery pressed into its service. It soon became capable of sending forth a thousand muskets a-day. To such a length did the dictators carry their principle of managing every thing of their own authority, that they compelled a return of the whole subsistence in every part of the country, and endeavoured to purchase it all, and distribute it either to the armies, or at a low price to the imperious citizens of the towns.[1]

[1] Th. v. 183, 188. Hist de la Conv. iii. 237, 245.

This system of forced requisitions gave the government the command of a large proportion of the agricultural produce of the kingdom, and it was enforced with merciless severity. Not only grain, but horses, carriages, and conveyances of every sort, were forcibly taken from the cultivators; and as the payment they received was merely in assignats, it in truth amounted to nothing. These exactions excited the most violent discontent, but no one ventured to give it vent; to have expressed dissatisfaction, would immediately have led to a denunciation at the nearest Revolutionary Committee, and put the complainer in imminent hazard of his life. To complete the burden, the democratic power, incessant clamour, and destitute situation of the people in the great towns, rendered it indispensable to adopt some general measures for their relief; and the only method which was found effectual, was to put the great cities on the same footing with the armies, and give the agents of government the right of making forced requisitions for their support.[2]

Of Grain, Horses, and Carriages.

[2] Th. vii. 41.

The maintenance of such immense bodies of men soon came to be of itself equal to the whole administration of an ordinary government. A board was appointed of five directors, who soon had ten thousand persons in their daily pay, incessantly occupied in en-

Public robbery for support of populace of cities.

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forcing these requisitions for the support of the great cities. That of Paris was of itself an army. No less than 636,000 persons daily received rations at the public offices, amounting to eighteen hundred and ninety-seven sacks of meal; and the attention of government was incessantly directed towards keeping the citizens in good humour by regularity in their distribution. The losses sustained by the agriculturists in providing for this daily consumption were enormous; the cost of producing their grain had augmented tenfold by the depreciation of paper, and yet they were only paid the former price by the requisitionists. The farmers were obliged to pay ten francs a-day to their labourers instead of one franc, as in 1790, and every thing else in the same proportion; yet they were compelled to part with their grain, at the price fixed by the *maximum*, to the imperious and needy multitudes in the towns. In other words, nine-tenths of the subsistence daily consumed in Paris was extorted *without payment* from the cultivators in the country, and the cries of the sufferers stifled by the prospect of the guillotine; a striking instance of the grinding oppression exercised even over their own class by the sovereign multitude when they once obtain the ascendency, and the state of subjection to which, in the progress of revolutions, the inhabitants of the country invariably fall to the citizens of towns.[1]

[1] Th. vii. 233, 237. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 180, 240.

The immense burden it entailed on the State.

The necessity of feeding the sovereign multitude entailed other expenses of a most serious kind on the Convention, and constituted a large part of their never-ending financial embarrassments. Government bought grain from foreigners for twenty-one francs the quintal, and retailed it to the populace for fourteen; the cessation of agricultural labour in a great part of the country rendered it indispensable to carry on this

ruinous commerce to a great extent, and the losses thence accruing to the state were stated by Cambon as enormous. The expense of feeding the inhabitants of Paris soon became almost as great as maintaining its fourteen armies. The Convention introduced the ruinous system of distributing every day, to every citizen of Paris, a pound of bread a-day, at the price of three sous in assignats; a burden which, from the fall in the value of paper, soon became almost as great as that of supporting them altogether.[1]

[1] Th. vii. 137. Lac. xiii. 42.

Forced loans from the opulent classes.

At the commencement of the Reign of Terror, the government adopted the plan of a forced loan from the opulent classes. This tax was imposed on an ascending scale, increasing according to the fortunes of the individuals; and out of an income of 50,000 francs, or about L. 2000 a-year, they took, in 1792, 36,000 francs, or about L. 1600. This immense burden was calculated as likely to produce at once a milliard of francs, or L. 40,000,000 Sterling, and as a security for this advance, the persons taxed received assignats, or were inscribed as public creditors on the *grande livre* of the French funds; a security, in either case, depending entirely on the success of the Revolution, and which proved in the end almost elusory.[2]

[2] Hist. de la Conv. iii. 250, 300. Th. vii. 203.

Confusion of the Old and Revolutionary Debt.

The public creditors of every description continued to be paid in assignats at par, notwithstanding their having fallen to a tenth of their nominal value; in other words, they received only a tenth part of what was really due to them. To perpetuate still farther the dependence of the public creditors of every description on the fortunes of the Revolution, the plan was projected by Cambon, and adopted by the Convention, of compelling all holders of stock to surrender to government their titles to it, and in lieu of every other written right, they were merely inscribed on the

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grande livre of the French debt; and an extract of that inscription constituted thereafter the sole title of the proprietor. Most severe laws were enacted to compel the surrender of the older titles to the stock, which were immediately burned, and if a year elapsed without this being done, the capital was forfeited. All the capital sums owing by the state were converted into perpetual annuities, at the rate of five per cent. so that a stock of 1000 francs was inscribed in the book for a perpetual annuity of 50 francs, and government for ever relieved of the burden of discharging the principal sums. "In this manner," said Cambon, "the debt contracted by despotism becomes indistinguishable from that contracted since the Revolution; and I defy despotic power, should it ever revive, to distinguish its ancient creditors from those of the new *régime*. As soon as this operation is completed, you will see the capitalist who now desires the restoration of a King, because he has a King for a debtor, and who fears that he will lose his fortune if he is not re-established, desire equally vehemently the preservation of the Republic, when his private interests are irrecoverably wound up in its preservation."[1] The whole creditors, both Royal and Republican, were paid only in assignats, which progressively fell to a fifth, a tenth, a hundredth, and at last, in 1797, to a two hundred and fiftieth part of their nominal value; so that in the space of a few years the payment was entirely elusory, and a national bankruptcy had in fact existed many years before it was formally declared by the Directory.

[1] Th. v. 147, 191, 193. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 290-319.

Continued Fall of the Assignats.

All the measures of government, how vigorous and despotic soever, proved inadequate to sustain the falling value of the assignats, or keep down the price of provisions, or articles of daily consumption. To

effect the object, they had recourse to new and still more oppressive regulations. To destroy the competition of rival companies, which prevented the direction of capital towards the purchase of the national domains, they abolished, by decree, all life insurance societies, and all companies of every description, of which the shares were transferable from hand to hand; they declared traitors to their country all those who placed their funds in any investments in countries with which the Republic was at war; and condemned to twenty years of irons every person convicted of refusing payment of any debt in assignats, or entering into any transaction in which they were received at less than their nominal value. They ordered that the bells of the churches should every where be melted down into sous pieces, to answer the immediate wants of the peasantry; and passed a decree, which ranked forestalling with capital crimes, and punished it with death. By this last law, it was declared that every one was to be considered as a forestaller, who withdrew from circulation merchandise of primary necessity, without immediately exposing them to public sale. The articles declared to be of primary necessity, were bread, wine, butchers' meat, grain, oats, vegetables, fruits, coal, wood, butter, cheese, linen, cotton stuffs, and dress of every description except silks. To carry into execution this iniquitous decree, the most inquisitorial powers were conferred on the Commissaries named by the Commune. Every merchant was obliged, at their summons, to give a statement of the goods contained in his warehouses; these declarations were liable to be checked at any hour by domiciliary visits; and any fraud or concealment was declared punishable with death. Commissioners, appointed by the Communes, were authoriz-

Severe Laws against Forestallers and all Public Companies.

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ed to fix the price at which all these articles were to be sold; and if the necessary cost of the manufacture was such as to render the price beyond the reach of the people, they were still to be exposed to sale, at such a reduced price as might bring them within their means.[1] An atrocious edict, pressing with unparalleled severity upon the industrious classes, merely to gratify the needy and clamorous multitude on whom the government depended, and which, if it had subsisted long in force, would have destroyed all the industry of France, and handed over the people to the unmitigated horrors of actual famine.

[1] Th. v. 204. -207.

Direful Effects of these Laws.

These extravagant measures had not been many months in operation, before they produced the most disastrous effects. A great proportion of the shops in Paris, and all the principal towns, were shut; business of every sort was at a stand; the laws of the *maximum*, and against forestallers, had spread terror and distrust as much among the middling classes, who had commenced the Revolution, as the guillotine had among nobles and priests, who had been its earliest victims. The retail dealers, who had purchased their stock from the wholesale merchants before the *maximum*, and at a price higher than that allowed by the new Tariff, were compelled, by the terror of death, to sell at a loss to themselves, and saw their fortunes gradually melting away in their daily transactions. Even those who had laid in their stock after the imposition of the *maximum*, were in no better situation, for that regulation had only fixed their price when retailed to the public; but as it had not fixed the price at which the previous manufacture was to be accomplished, nor the necessary transport and storing it in their warehouses effected, and as their operations were necessarily paid in proportion to the depreciated va-

lue of the currency, the subsequent sale at the prices fixed by the *maximum* entailed ruinous losses on the tradesmen. The consequence was, that the greater part of the shops were everywhere closed; and those who continued to do business, did so only by fraud; the worst articles alone exposed to public sale at the legal price, and the best reserved for those who were willing in secret to pay their real value.[1]

[1] Th, v. 399, 400.

Excessive violence of the People from the rise of Prices.

The people, who perceived these frauds, and witnessed the closing of so great a number of shops, were transported with fury, and besieged the Convention with the most violent petitions, insisting that the dealers should be compelled to reopen their shops, and continue to sell as usual, in spite of any loss they might sustain. They denounced the butchers, who were accused of selling unwholesome meat; the bakers, who furnished coarse bread for the poor, and fine for the rich; the wine merchants, who diluted their liquors by the most noxious drugs; the salt merchants, the grocers, the confectioners, who conspired together to adulterate the articles in which they dealt in a thousand different ways. Chaumette, the Procureur-General, supported their demands in a violent speech. "We sympathize," said he, "with the evils of the people, because we are the people ourselves; the whole council is composed of Sans Culottes; it is the sovereign multitude. We care not though our heads fall, provided posterity will deign to collect our skulls. It is not the Gospel which I invoke, it is Plato. He that strikes with the sword, should be struck with the sword; he that strikes with poison should be struck with poison; he that famishes the people, should die of famine. If subsistence and articles of merchandise are awanting, from whom shall the people seize them? From the Convention? No. From the constituted

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authorities? No. They will take them from the shopkeepers and merchants. It is arms, and not gold, which is wanted to set in motion our manufactories; the world must know that the giant people can crush all its mercantile speculations. Rousseau has said, when the people have nothing to eat, they will eat the rich."[1]

Oct. 14, 1793.

[1] Th. v. 403. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 409, 437.

Intimidated by such formidable petitioners, the Assembly and the Municipality adopted still more rigorous measures. Hitherto they had only fixed the price of articles of necessity in a manufactured state, now they resolved to fix the price of the raw material; and the idea was even entertained of seizing the material and the workmen alike for the service of the state, and converting all France into one vast manufactory in the employment of government. The Communes declared that every merchant who had been engaged in business for above a year, who either abandoned or diminished it, should be sent to prison as a suspected person; the prices which the merchant could exact from the retailer, and the retailer from the customer, were minutely fixed; the Revolutionary Committees were alone permitted to issue tickets, authorizing purchases of any sort; one species of bread, of coarse quality, was only allowed to be baked; and to prevent the scandalous scenes which daily occurred at the bakers' shops, where a number of the poor passed a part of the night with the cord in their hands, it was enacted that the distribution should commence with the last arrived; a regulation which only changed the direction of the tumult. These regulations were speedily adopted from the Municipality of Paris over all France.[2]

Renewed Measures of Severity by the Municipality;

[2] Th. v. 404, 405.

The Convention adopted the still more hazardous step of fixing the prime cost of all articles of rude produce. The price was fixed on the basis of the prices of 1790, augmented by certain fixed rates for the pro-

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fit of the different hands through which they passed, before reaching the consumer. To carry into execution the numerous regulations on this subject, a commission of subsistence and provisioning was appointed, with absolute powers, extending over all France; it was charged with the execution of the tariffs, with the superintendence of the conduct of the municipalities in that particular; with continually receiving statements of the quantity of subsistence in the country, and the places where it existed; with transporting it from one quarter to another, and providing for the subsistence of the armies, and the furnishing them with the means of transport.[1]

Establishment of the Committee of Subsistence.

[1] Th. v. 405, 406.

Speculation of every sort, even the gambling of the Bourse, was towards the close of the Reign of Terror almost destroyed. The bankers and merchants, accused on all sides of elevating prices, and seeing some of their number daily led out to the scaffold, deserted the exchange, and sought for an asylum in the solitude of their homes. The company of the Indies, the last existing mercantile establishment, was abolished; government resolved to have no investment for capital but the purchase of the national domains.*[2]

Equalization of Weights and Measures, and Decimal Notation.

[2] Th. v. 409, 410.

* The preceding details, all taken from the Republican writers of France, demonstrate that the picture drawn by a contemporary writer was not overcharged; and that the genius of Mr Burke had justly discerned, through the fumes of democracy, the galling bondage it was inflicting on mankind. "The state of France," says he, "is perfectly simple. It consists of but two descriptions; the oppressors and the oppressed.

"The first has the whole authority of the state in their hands; all the arms, all the revenues of the public, all the confiscations of individuals and corporations. They have taken the lower sort from their occupations, and have put them into pay, that they may form them into a body of Janissaries to over-rule and awe property. The heads of these wretches they never suffered to cool. They supply them with a food for fury varied by the day, besides the sensual state of intoxication from which they are rarely free. They have made the priests

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Nor was it only on the opulent classes that the revolutionary enactments pressed with severity; they were equally oppressive to the poorest. Never, in truth, were the labouring poor subjected to so many and such

and people formally abjure the Divinity; they have estranged them from every civil, moral, and social, or even natural and instinctive sentiment, habit, and practice, and have rendered them systematically savages, to make it impossible for them to be the instruments of any sober and virtuous arrangement, or to be reconciled to any state of order, under any name whatsoever.

"The other description—the oppressed—are people of some property; they are the small relics of the persecuted landed interest; they are the burghers and the farmers. By the very circumstance of their being of some property, though numerous in some points of view, they cannot be very considerable as a number. In cities, the nature of their occupations renders them domestic and feeble; in the country, it confines them to their farm for subsistence. The National Guards are all changed and reformed. Every thing suspicious in the description of which they were composed is rigorously disarmed. Committees, called of vigilance and safety, are everywhere formed; a most severe and scrutinising inquisition, far more rigid than any thing ever known or imagined. Two persons cannot meet and confer without hazard to their liberty, and even to their lives. Numbers scarcely credible have been executed, and their property confiscated. At Paris, and in most other towns, the bread they buy is a daily dole, which they cannot obtain without a daily ticket delivered to them by their masters. Multitudes of all ages and sexes are actually imprisoned. I have reason to believe, that in France there are not, for various state crimes, so few as twenty thousand actually in jail—a large proportion of people of property in any state. If a father of a family should show any disposition to resist, or to withdraw himself from their power, his wife and children are cruelly to answer for it. It is by means of these hostages that they keep the troops, which they force by masses (as they call it) into the field—true to their colours.

"Another of their resources is not to be forgotten. They have lately found a way of giving a sort of ubiquity to the supreme sovereign authority, which no monarch has been able yet to give to any representation of his.

"The Commissioners of the National Convention, who are the Members of the Convention itself, and really exercise all its powers, make continual circuits through every province, and visits to every army. There they supersede all the ordinary authorities, civil and military, and change and alter every thing at their pleasure. So that, in effect, no deliberative capacity exists in any portion of the inhabitants."—Burke on the Policy of the Allies. Works, vii. 135.

vexatious restraints, or obedience to them enforced by such numerous and sanguinary punishments. No one ventured to indulge in any luxury, or abandon himself to any gratification; metallic currency had almost disappeared, and the poor received their wages merely in paper currency, with which they were unable to purchase the necessaries of life. If they were shopkeepers, they were compelled to sell at a fictitious price; if they were purchasers, they were under the necessity of buying the most wretched articles, because the best were withdrawn by the effect of the forced sales enjoined by government. Only one kind of bread, of the blackest and coarsest kind, was to be had, and that could be obtained in no other way but by receiving tickets from the Revolutionary Committees, by waiting half the night, or for hours during the day, at the doors of the bakers, with a rope in their hands. The names of the weights and measures, of the days and months, were changed; the labouring poor had only three Sundays in the month instead of four; the consolations of religion, the worship of the Deity, were at an end.[1]

Grinding Oppression on the Poor.

[1] Th. v. 435.

All the efforts of the Committee of Public Safety, after some time, became insufficient to procure an adequate supply of subsistence. Commerce escaped the ruinous law of the *maximum*, and it escaped it in the most disastrous of all ways, by a total cessation. Want of the severest kind was experienced in every branch of human consumption; the ordinary supplies of butcher-meat failed, and as it could still be publicly sold only at the *maximum*, the butchers exposed only the most unwholesome kind of food, and reserved that of the better sort for clandestine sale. The evil soon extended to other articles; vegetables, fruits, eggs, butter, and fish, disappeared from the markets. Bands of persons travelled far on the high-roads, and met

Their destitute and deplorable condition.

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them as they were approaching Paris, where they were clandestinely purchased at prices far above the *maximum*, for the use of the opulent classes. The people were animated with the most violent indignation at these practices, and, to put a stop to them, the Commune enacted that no butchers should be permitted to go out to meet the cattle on their way to the markets; that no meat should be bought or sold but at the established stalls; and that no crowd should be allowed to collect round the butchers' doors before six in the morning, instead of three, the time when they usually began to assemble. These regulations, like all the others, failed of effect; the crowds were just as great and as clamorous round the butchers' shops as before; violent tumults constantly arose among those who had got possession of the ropes at their doors; and, as a last resource, the government was preparing to lay out the gardens of the Tuileries, of the Luxembourg, and of all the opulent persons round Paris, in the cultivation of garden stuffs.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 146. 151.

People of Paris put on reduced Rations.

At length the evils arising from the *maximum* became so excessive, that the inhabitants of Paris were obliged to be put on an allowance of animal food. The commission for provisions fixed the daily consumption at 75 oxen, 150 quintals of mutton and veal, and 200 hogs. All the animals intended for the consumption of the metropolis were brought to a public market-place, where alone meat was allowed to be sold; and the butchers were only allowed to deliver every five days half a pound of meat to each family for each head. The same *cartes de sureté* were issued by the Revolutionary Committees for this scanty aid, as for the rations of bread. Shortly after, the supply of wood and charcoal was found to fail, and laws were passed, preventing any one from having in store

more than a very limited quantity of these necessary articles. As the embarrassment of the finances continued to be excessive, notwithstanding the issue of another milliard, or L. 40,000,000, in assignats, recourse was had to a new forced exaction from the rich. This consisted of 100,000,000 francs, or L. 4,000,000, which was levied upon them without any obligation of reimbursement, even in the depreciated paper of the Republic.[1]

Fresh arbitrary Taxation of the Opulent.

[1] Th. vi. 310, 314.

To complete the dependence of the debt on the Revolutionary government, Cambon carried into effect, during the Reign of Terror, a project for the conversion of the numerous class of life-annuitants, who were public creditors, into holders of a perpetual annuity. To accomplish this object, a scale was adopted, by which, to the older class of small life-annuitants under L. 80, and above forty years of age, the annual income was preserved, and the conversion only enforced against the excess of their annuity above this sum. This modification of the law was some relief to the most indigent class of the state annuitants; but still the conversion itself was a very great hardship to a numerous class of persons who had sunk a small capital, in order to procure a high interest during the remainder of their life, as they found themselves suddenly reduced to a half, and in many cases to a fourth, of their former income; and so numerous was this class of life-annuitants in France, and so tenacious are men of whatever touches their pecuniary interests, in preference to every other consideration, that there was no measure at the time which excited such violent discontent: and the Convention were more blamed for this retrenchment, than for all the sanguinary and terrible laws which had signalized their administration.[2]

Conversion of the Life into Perpetual Annuitants.

[2] Th. vi. 315, 316.

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Such was the state of the internal changes on property produced by the Revolution, when the overthrow of Robespierre arrested its course. Never before, since the beginning of the world, had so great an experiment been made, and never had the disastrous consequences of giving the reins to popular ambition been so fully exemplified. Begun to avert the evils of national bankruptcy, instituted to preserve the public credit, it terminated in the most unheard of disasters. It received at first the unanimous support of the whole French nation; in its progress it destroyed all those whose early aid had contributed to its advancement. The King supported it and perished; the nobles supported it and perished; the clergy supported it and perished; the merchants supported it and perished; the public creditors supported it and perished; the shopkeepers supported it and perished; the artisans supported it and perished; the peasants supported it and perished. The nobles, whose passion for innovation and misguided declamations in favour of equality, had first led to the convocation of the States-General, who early set the example of submission to the popular will, and voluntarily abdicated their titles, their privileges, and their rights, to place themselves at the head of the movement, were the first to be destroyed. Decimated by the guillotine, exiles from their country, destitute wanderers in foreign lands, they beheld their estates confiscated, their palaces sold, their children proscribed, themselves undone. While by the waters of Babylon they sat down and wept, they learned to lament the fatal precipitance with which they had excited the ambition of their inferiors, by yielding so precipitately to the public frenzy in favour of democracy. The clergy, who had proved themselves the earliest and steadiest friends

Reflections on the successive destruction of all classes by the Revolution.

of freedom, whose junction with the Tiers Etat in the hour of peril had first given them a superiority over the privileged classes, and compelled the ruinous union of all the orders in one Chamber, were utterly destroyed by the party whom they had cherished: their religion was abolished, their churches closed, their property confiscated, themselves subjected to cruel and tyrannical enactments, compelled to wander in utter destitution in foreign lands, or purchase a miserable pittance by violating their oaths, and earning the contempt of all the faithful among their flocks. The commercial classes, whose jealousy of the unjust privileges of the noblesse had first fostered the flame of liberty, were consumed in the conflagration which it had raised; the once flourishing colonies of the monarchy were in flames, its manufacturing cities in ruins, its public wealth destroyed, its sails banished from the ocean, its naval establishments in decay. Blasted by a ruinous system of paper currency, and crushed in the grasp of a relentless despotism, manufacturing industry was withered, and commercial capital annihilated. The public creditors, once so loud in their praises of the first movements of the Revolution, whose enthusiasm had raised the public funds thirty per cent. in one day, when Neckar was restored to power, in 1788, on the shoulders of the democracy, were now crushed beneath its wheels; the once opulent capitalists, ruined by the fall of the public securities, deprived of their property by a fictitious paper, paid by their debtors in a nominal currency, had long since sunk to the dust; while the miserable *rentiers*, cheated out of almost all their income by the payment of their annuities in assignats, were wandering about in utter despair, supporting a miserable existence by charity, or terminating it by acts of suicide. The

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shopkeepers, whose unanimous shouts had so long supported the Constituent Assembly, whose bayonets had first upheld the fortunes of the Revolution, at last tasted its bitter fruits; as its movement advanced, and they became the objects of jealousy to still lower ambition, the fury of plebeian revenge was directed against their ranks; insensibly they melted away under the axe of the guillotine, or were destroyed by the law of the *maximum*, and lamented with unavailing tears the convulsions which had deprived them at once of the purchasers of their commodities, the security for their property, and the free disposal of their industry. The artisans, who had expected a flood of prosperity from the regeneration of society, whose pikes had so often, at Jacobin command, issued from the Fauxbourgs to overawe the legislature, were speedily steeped in misery from the consequences of their actions; impatient of restraint, unable to endure a superior, they were at last subjected to the most galling bondage; destitute of employment, fed only by the bounty of government, they were fettered in every action of their lives; debarred the power of purchasing, even the necessaries of life for themselves, they were forced first to wait half the day as needy suppliants at the offices of the committees who issued their tickets, and then to watch half the night round the bakers' shops to procure the wretched pittance of a pound of black bread a-day for each member of their families. The peasants expected an immediate deliverance from tithes, taxes, and burdens of every description, from the consequences of their emancipation, and they found themselves ground down by the law of the *maximum*, forced to sell at nominal prices to the purveyors for the armies, and fettered in every action of their lives by oppressive regulations; they saw their sons perish

in the field, or rot in the hospitals, their horses and cattle seized for the forced requisitions, and the produce of their labour torn from them by battalions of armed men, to maintain an indigent and worthless rabble in the great cities of the Republic.

But it necessarily results from the Development of the Revolutionary Passion.

Consequences so extraordinary, so unlooked for to every class of society from the throne to the cottage, are singularly instructive as to the consequences of revolutions. But yet, if the matter be considered dispassionately, it is evident that they must in every age attend any considerable convulsion in society. When a tree is felled, it is the leaves and the extremities which first begin to wither, because they are soonest affected by a stoppage in the supplies by which the whole is nourished; it is the same with society. Upon the occurrence of a revolution, the working classes are the first to suffer, because they have no stock to maintain themselves during a period of adversity, and being wholly dependent on the daily wages of labour, are the earliest victims of the catastrophe which has interrupted them.

It is this immediate effect of a revolution in spreading misery through the working classes, which in the general case renders its march irresistible, when not arrested in the outset by a firm combination of all the holders of property, and precipitates society into a series of convulsions from which it can hardly emerge without the destruction of the existing generation. The shock given to credit, the stoppage to speculation, the contraction to expenditure, is so excessive, that the lower orders are immediately involved in distress; and the same causes which increase their discontent, and augment their disposition to revolt, disable government, by the rapid fall of the revenue, either from administering relief or exerting force. The conse-

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quence is, that fresh insurrections take place; more extravagant and levelling doctrines become popular; a lower but more energetic class rises to the head of affairs; desperate measures of finance are adopted, the public expenditure is increased, while the national income is diminished; and after a succession of vain attempts to avoid the catastrophe, national bankruptcy takes place, and the accumulations of ages are swept off in a general, public, and private insolvency.

Successive steps of its disastrous progress.

The different steps of this disastrous but unavoidable progress are clearly marked in the successive stages of the French Revolution. Within six months after the Revolution broke out, it was discovered that the revenue had fallen, in consequence of the general uncertainty of the future, from L.24,000,000 a-year to L.17,000,000, and that at the very time when the embarrassment of the finances had been the principal cause of the convocation of the States-General. No resource could be found to meet the pressing difficulties of the Exchequer, but the confiscation of the property of the church, and subsequently that of the emigrant nobles. These measures again engendered evils which tended to perpetuate the difficulties from which they sprung; the confiscation of the church property rendered necessary the laws against the refractory priests, and thereby lighted the flames of civil war in La Vendée; while the severe enactments against the emigrant nobles produced a war of life and death with the aristocratic monarchs in Europe. Pressed by civil war within, and the forces of Europe without, the Convention found themselves compelled to have recourse to the system of assignats, and carried on the enormous expenditure of a hundred and seventy millions sterling a-year, by dispensing with a prodigal hand the confiscated wealth of more than half of

Irresistible power which made the one lead to the other.

France. This prodigious issue of paper necessarily led to its rapid depreciation; all obligations of debt and credit were overturned by the necessity of accepting payment in a nominal currency; the rapid rise of the price of provisions compelled the government to adopt a *maximum*, and interfere with the arm of force in the care of public subsistence. Thence the forced requisitions, the compulsory sales, the distribution of rations, and all the innumerable tyrannical regulations which fettered industry in every department; and, at length, by exciting the passions of the people against each other, brought down even to the humblest class the horrors which they had originally inflicted on their superiors.

Such a survey of the consequence of human violence, both vindicates the justice of Providence, by demonstrating how rapidly and unavoidably the guilt of every class in society brings upon itself its own punishment, and tends to make us judge charitably of the conduct of men placed in such a terrible crisis of society. Harshly as we may think of the atrocities of the Revolution, let no man be sure, that, placed in similar circumstances, he would not have been betrayed into the same excesses. It is the insensible gradation in violence, the experienced necessity of advancing with the tide, which renders such convulsions so perilous to the morals as well as the welfare of nations. The authors of many of the worst measures in the Revolution were restored to private life, as innocent and inoffensive as other men; the most atrocious violations of right had been so long foreseen and discussed, that their occurrence produced little or no sensation. "Of all the lessons derived from the history of human passion," says Lavalette, "the most important is the utter impossibility which the best men will always ex-

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perience of stopping, if they are once led into the path of error. If, a few years before they were perpetrated, the crimes of the Revolution could have been portrayed to those who afterwards committed them, even Robespierre himself would have recoiled with horror. Men are seduced, in the first instance, by plausible theories; their heated imaginations represent them as beneficial and easy of execution; they advance unconsciously from errors to faults, and from faults to crimes, till sensibility is destroyed by the spectacle of guilt, and the most savage atrocities are dignified by the name of state policy."[1] Such always will be the case; it is the pressure of external circumstances which ultimately produces guilt, as much as guilt which at first induces the difficulties of public affairs. The leaders of a revolution are constantly advancing before the fire which they themselves have lighted; the moment they stop, they are consumed in the flames.

[1] Lavalette, i. 178.

The progressive destruction of all classes during those melancholy years, and the successive elevation of one faction more guilty and extravagant than another to the head of affairs, has given rise to a general opinion among the French Republican writers, that there is a fatality in the march of revolutions, and that an invincible necessity drives the actors in those tempestuous scenes into deeds of bloodshed and cruelty. In truth, there is a necessity under which they act; but it is not the blind impulse of fatality, but the moral law of Nature, destined to provide for the expulsion from society of passions inconsistent with its existence. Experience in every age has abundantly proved, that the fervour of democracy is fatal to the best interests of mankind, and rapidly leads to the greatest miseries to all classes, because it subjects society to the guidance of those who are least qualified to direct it; but

yet that it is of all passions the most difficult to eradicate from the human heart, and that when once it is generally diffused, whole generations of political fanatics must be destroyed before it can be reduced to a degree consistent with the existence of order. Ages might elapse, therefore, during the contest with this devouring principle, were it not that in its very nature it involves the causes of its speedy destruction. The successive ambition and passions of the different bodies who rise to eminence, soon occasion that frightful effusion of blood, or those wild and anarchical measures which, by involving whole classes in destruction, necessarily lead, though by a painful process, to a restoration of the natural order of society. This is the great moral to be derived from the history of the French Revolution; this it is which in every age has made democratic madness terminate in military despotism. In nations, as well as individuals, Providence has a sure method of dealing with the passions and sins of men, which is to leave them to the consequences of their own extravagance.

Even under circumstances, however, in appearance the most adverse, the laws of Nature provide an antidote to the greatest evils which afflict society. The march of democracy, though not prevented by the wisdom of man, is speedily stopt by the laws of Nature. The people in the end learn from their own suffering, if they will not from the experience of others, that the gift of unbounded political power is fatal to those who receive it; that despotism may flow from the workshop of the artisan, as well as the palace of the sovereign; and that those who, yielding to the wiles of the tempter, will eat of the forbidden fruit, must be driven from the joys of Paradise, to wander in the suffering of a guilty world. Genius, long a stranger to the cause

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of order, resumes its place by her side; she gives to a suffering, what she refused to a ruling cause. The indignation of virtue, the satire of talent, comes to be bestowed on the panders to popular gratification; the sycophancy of journals, the baseness of the press, the tyranny of the mob, employs the pencil of the Tacitus who portrays the decline and fall of the nation which has been torn by such convulsions. It is this reaction of Genius against Violence which steadies the march of human events, and renders the miseries of one age the source of elevation and instruction to those which are to succeed it; and whatever may be the temporary ascendency of violence or anarchy, there can be but one opinion as to the final tendency of such changes to mankind, how fatal soever they may be to the people among whom they arise; we can discern the rainbow of peace, though not ourselves destined to reach the ark of salvation; and look forward with confidence to the future improvement of the species, from amidst the storm which is to subvert the Monarchies of Europe.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1794.

ARGUMENT.

Military strength and naval weakness of France, in consequence of the Revolution—State of the respective Navies of the two Powers—Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—Treason Trials in England and Scotland—Supplies voted for the year 1794, and Forces put on foot by Great Britain—British Conquests in the West Indies, and in the Mediterranean—Great naval Victory on 1st June, by Lord Howe—Tactics by which the Victory was gained—Its great moral effect in England—Vast military Preparations of France—Talent with which it was wielded—Forces of the Allies and of the French—Plan of Allied Campaign—Landrecy taken—Ineffectual efforts of the Republicans to raise the Siege—Defeat of Clairfait—Jourdan ordered up from the Rhine to the Sambre with forty-five thousand men—Various indecisive Actions on the Sambre—French at length driven over the River—Battle of Turcoin—Pichegru takes the command in West Flanders—French indecisive Actions—The French again cross the Sambre; invest Charleroi, and are driven across the River again—Arrival of Jourdan with forty thousand Men—Sambre again crossed, and Charleroi reinvested—Separation of the Austrians and English—Pichegru attacks Clairfait—Imperialists assemble to succour Charleroi—Battle of Fleurus—Allies, though not defeated, retreat—Pichegru drives back Clairfait in West Flanders—Jourdan and Pichegru unite at Brussels—English retreat towards Holland—Inactivity of the French—Decree of the Convention to give no quarter: is not executed by the Generals—Noble Proclamation by the Duke of York—Operations on the Rhine—Inactivity of the Prussians—Operations in Piedmont—Mont Cenis is carried by the French—Great successes of Napoleon and Massena in the Maritime Alps—The Piedmontese are driven over the ridge of the Alps—War in the Eastern Pyrenees—Great difficulties of the Spaniards—They are totally defeated in their Lines by the French—Collioure taken—Invasion of Spain by the Western Pyrenees—Great successes of the Republicans—Siege of Belgrade, which is taken—Great Defeat of the Spaniards near Figueras—Invasion of Biscay, and defeat of the Spaniards—They sue for Peace—Renewal of Hostilities in Flanders—British retire to the right bank of the Meuse—Battle of Ruremonde, and Defeat of the Austrians—They cross the Rhine—Active pursuit of the English by the Republicans—British take a position behind the Waal—Venloo is taken—Siege of Nimeguen, which also falls—Misunderstanding of the Dutch and English—Winter Campaign of Pichegru—He makes a general Attack on the Allied Position—Wahmoden retires towards Hanover—Dutch in vain sue for Peace—French cross the Waal—Stadtholder embarks for England—Revolution at Amsterdam, which

admits the French troops—Dutch Fleet captured by the French cavalry—Violent measures of Spoliation adopted by the French towards the Dutch—Concluding operations on the Rhine—Army of the Moselle occupies Treves—Allies driven over the Rhine, and Mayence invested—Conclusion of the Campaign in Savoy—Renewal of the war in La Vendée—Storming of Thureau's intrenched Camps—Rise of the Chouan War—Its vast extent—Immense results of the campaign—The prodigious Forces of the Republic—Great issues of Assignats to support the enormous expenditure of Government—Progressive increase of the French forces during the Campaign—The period of success for the Allies was past—General Reflections on the Campaign—Great military effect of the French frontier Fortresses.

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"THE war," says Jomini, "so rashly provoked by the declamations of the Girondists, was not commenced in good earnest; and it was already evident that all the established relations and balance of power in Europe were to be dissolved in the struggle. France and England had hardly yet joined in mortal conflict, and yet it was easy to foresee that the one was destined to become irresistible at land, and the other to acquire the dominion of the seas."[1]

[1] Jom. v. 3.

Military strength and naval weakness of France in consequence of the Revolution.

It was not the mere energy of the Revolution, nor the closing of all other avenues of employment, which produced the fearful military power of France. These causes, while they alone were in operation, proved totally insufficient to withstand the shock of the disciplined armies of Germany. It was the subsequent despotism of the Committee of Public Safety which consolidated the otherwise discordant materials of the Revolution, and, by superinducing the terror of authority on the fervour of freedom, favoured the growth of military prowess. Liberty without discipline would have perished in licentiousness; discipline without spirit would have proved inadequate to the struggle; it was the combination of the two which became so fatal to the European monarchies, and by turning all the energies of France into one regulated channel, converted the Reign of Terror into the school of conquest.

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But while these changes were in progress on the continent of Europe, a very different fate awaited the naval armaments of France. Power at sea, unlike victory at land, cannot spring from mere suffering, or from the energy of destitute warriors with arms in their hands. Fleets require nautical habits, commercial wealth, and extensive credit; without an expenditure of capital, and the gradual formation of a nursery of seamen, it is in vain to contend with an established power on that element. The destruction of the capital and commerce of France during the fury of the Revolution, while it augmented by the misery it produced, the military, destroyed by the penury it occasioned, the naval resources of the Republic. Before the English fleets had issued from their harbours, the flag of France had already disappeared from the seas; commercial wealth, private enterprise, were extinguished; and the sanguinary government found that victories were not to be acquired at sea as conquest at land, by merely forcing column after column of conscripts on board their vessels.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 4. Th. vi. 271.

Respective Navies of the two Powers.

The consequence was, that from the very first, the naval superiority of England became apparent. France, at the commencement of the war, had seventy-five ships of the line, and seventy frigates; but the officers, chiefly drawn from the aristocratical classes, had in great part emigrated at the commencement of the Revolution; and those of an inferior order who supplied their place, were deficient both in the education and experience requisite in the naval service. On the other hand, England had one hundred and twenty-nine ships of the line, and above one hundred frigates, of whom ninety of each class were immediately put in commission, while seamen of the best description, to the amount of eighty-five thousand, were drawn

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from her inexhaustible merchant service. Unable to face their enemies in large squadrons, the French navy remained in total inactivity; but their merchants, destitute of any pacific employment for their money, fitted out an immense number of privateers, which, for a considerable time, proved extremely injurious to the British commerce.[1]

[1] New Ann. Register, 1794, pp. 336—342. Jom. v. 278. James, i. App. No. 6.

The efforts of Government at the same period were vigorously directed to the suppression of sedition in Great Britain. The great extent and obvious danger of the illegal and revolutionary societies which had been formed in every part of England, in close alliance with the French Convention, left no room for doubt that vigorous measures were necessary to arrest the contagion. For this purpose the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was proposed in Parliament, by Government, and excited the most angry discussions both in the legislature and the nation.

Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

Mr Fox objected in the strongest manner to the proposed measure, as destructive to the best principles of English liberty. "Were the Government about," he exclaimed, "in their rage at the hatred excited by their tyranny, to erect tribunals to punish the indignant public? Was terror, as in France, to be made the order of the day, and not a voice to be allowed to be lifted against Government? Was it resolved to demolish the British Constitution, one part after another, under pretence of preventing its destruction by French principles? The object of the societies, which they did not scruple to avow, was to obtain universal suffrage. The word Convention was now held up as an object of alarm, as if from it some calamity impended over the country; and yet, what was a Convention, but an assembly? If the people did any thing illegal, they were liable to be imprisoned and punish-

ed at the common law. Did it follow that because improper ideas of government had been taken up by the French, or because liberty had been there abused, that similar misfortunes would befall this country? Had that nation been protected by a Habeas Corpus Act, had the Government been constrained by standing laws to respect the rights of the community, these tenets would never have found an entrance into that unhappy country. By parity of reason they were only to be dreaded here, if the safeguards of the constitution were removed. Were the freedom of meeting to complain of grievances to be taken away, what would soon become of our boasted Constitution? And if it is to be withdrawn till the discontented are rooted out, or the thirst for uncontrolled power assuaged in Government, it will never be restored, and the liberties of Englishmen are finally destroyed."

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Pitt, that the question was, "Whether the dangers threatened to the state were not greater than any arising from the suspension proposed, which was only to last for six months, and in the meantime would not affect the rights of any class of society. The truth was, that we were driven to the necessity of imitating French violence, to resist the contagion of French principles. Was lenity to be admitted when the Constitution was at stake? Were a Convention upon Jacobin principles once established, who could foresee where it would end? Not to stop the progress of their opinions, were no better than granting a toleration to sedition and anarchy. It is in vain to deny the existence of designs against the Government and Constitution; and what mode of combating them can be so reasonable as the present suspension, which does not oppose the right of the people to meet together to petition for reform

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or a redress of abuses, but only aims at preventing the establishment of a power in the state superior to that of Parliament itself? The papers produced before the Committee demonstrate clearly that this is their object, and that they are leagued with all the societies which have brought desolation upon France; they have chosen a central spot to facilitate the assembly of demagogues from all quarters. Every society has been requested to transmit an account of its numbers, and arms have been procured and liberally distributed; unless these proceedings are speedily checked, the Government will soon be set at nought, and a revolution with all its horrors overspread the land."

May 16, 1794.

Moved by these arguments the House of Commons passed the bill for suspension by a majority of 261 to 42. It was adopted by the Lords without a division.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 268—274. Parl. Deb. xxxi. 274—299.

Treason Trials in England and Scotland.

Various prosecutions took place in Scotland, and the attention of the people was deeply excited by the trial of Hardy, Thelwall, and Horne Tooke, for treason in England. The documents on which the prosecution was founded left no doubt that these persons had been deeply implicated in designs for the change, if not the subversion of the government, by means of a convention of their own formation, not the constitutional channel of Parliament; but their acquittal by the independent verdict of a British jury, is to be regarded as an eminently fortunate event at that period. After so singular a triumph of popular principle, the most factious lost the power of alleging that the liberties of England were on the decline; satisfied with this great victory over their supposed oppressors, the people relapsed into their ancient habits of loyalty; the spirit of innovation, deprived of foreign support, and steadily resisted by the government, rapidly withered in the British soil; the passions of men, turned into an-

other channel, soon fixed on different objects, and the prosecution of the war with France became as great a source of interest to the multitude, as it had ever been to remodel the Constitution after the example of the Constituent Assembly.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1794, 268, 269.

The continuance of the war again gave rise to animated debates in both Houses of Parliament. On the part of the opposition, it was urged by Mr Fox and Mr Sheridan, "That the conduct of government since the war commenced had been a total departure from the principles of moderation on which they had so much prided themselves before it broke out. They then used language which breathed only the strictest neutrality, and this continued even after the King had been dethroned, and many of the worst atrocities of the Revolution had been perpetrated: but now, even though we did not altogether reject negociation, we issued declarations evidently calculated to render it impossible, and shake all faith in our national integrity. The allies had first by Prince Cobourg issued a proclamation, in which they engaged to retain whatever strongholds they might conquer, merely in pledge for Louis XVII., and five days afterwards, to their eternal disgrace, they had revoked that very proclamation, and openly avowed the intention, since uniformly acted upon, of making a methodical war of conquest on France. Supposing that the English government should be able to clear itself of all share in this infamous transaction, what was to be said of the declaration issued by Lord Hood on the 23d August, on the capture of Toulon, wherein he took possession of the town on the express conditions of maintaining the constitution of 1789, preserving the fleet of Louis XVII., and protecting all Frenchmen who repaired to our standard; after which came a dark enigmatical decla-

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ration from his Majesty, which, stripped off the elegant rubbish with which it was loaded, amounted merely to this, that the restoration of monarchy was the only condition on which we would treat with France.

"Has any thing occurred to alter the probability of success in the war? Have the triumphs of the coalition in Flanders been so very brilliant, the success of Lord Moira's expedition so decisive, the efforts at Toulon so victorious, as to afford more cheering prospects than were held out at its commencement? Have the internal condition of that country, and the prospects of the Royalist party, improved so much under the system of foreign attack, as to render it advisable to continue the contest for their sakes? Is not the internal state of France so divided, that it is impossible to say that the Royalist party, even in the districts most attached to monarchical principles, could agree on any form of government? And what have we done to support them? Liberated the garrisons of Valenciennes and Mayence, when they were shut up within their walls, and given them the means, by the absurd capitulation which we granted, of acting with decisive effect against their Royalist fellow-citizens in the west of France!

"All the treaties we have entered into contained a clause by which the contracting parties bound themselves not to lay down their arms while any part of the territory of either of them remained in the hands of the enemy. How have they adhered, or are likely to adhere to this stipulation? How has Prussia adhered? Why, she publicly declared her intention of laying down her arms, at the very time when large parts of her Allies' territories were in the occupation of the enemy, because she had discovered that the war was burden-

some. The Emperor has refused to agree to the clause, and Prussia has been retained an unwilling and feeble combatant on our side only by the bribe of enormous subsidies. It is evident what the result will be: our Allies will one by one drop off, or become so inefficient as to be perfectly useless when the contest becomes either perilous or burdensome; and we shall be left alone, with the whole weight of a contest on our own shoulders, undertaken for no legitimate object, continued for no conceivable end.

"It is in vain to conceal that we have made no advance whatever towards any rational prospect of closing the contest with either honour or advantage. In the first campaign, the Duke of Brunswick was defeated, and Flanders overrun; in the next, the most formidable confederacy ever formed in Europe has been baffled, and a furious civil war in different parts of the Republic extinguished. What have we to oppose to this astonishing exertion of vigour? The capture of a few sugar islands in the West Indies. Of what avail are they, or even the circumscribing the territorial limits of France itself, when such elements of strength exist in its interior. But let us revert to our old policy of attending to our maritime concerns, and, disregarding the anarchy and civil wars of the neighbouring states, and then, indeed, the conquests in the East and West Indies would afford an excellent foundation for the only desirable object, a general pacification. All views of aggrandizement on the part of France *are evidently unattainable, and must be abandoned by that power:* so that the professed objects of the war, permanent security to ourselves, may now securely be obtained."[1]

[1] Parl. Hist xxxi. 615, 623, 632.

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Pitt

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and Mr Jenkinson,* "That the real object of the war from the outset had been to obtain indemnity for the past, and security for the future. Are either of these objects likely to be obtained at this period? At present, there is no security for the continuance of peace, even if it were signed, for a single hour. Every successive faction which has risen to the head of affairs in France, has perished the moment that it attempted to imprint moderation on the external or internal measures of the Revolution. What overthrew the administration of Neckar? Moderation! What destroyed the Orleanists, the Girondists, the Brissotins, and all the various parties which have successively risen and fallen in that troubled hemisphere? Moderation. What has given its long lease of power to the anarchical faction of which Robespierre is the head? The total want of it: the infernal energy, unmeasured wickedness of its measures. What prospect is there of entering into a lasting accommodation with a power; or what the guarantee for the observance of treaties of a faction, whom a single nocturnal tumult may hurl from the seat of government, to make way for some other more outrageous and extravagant than itself.

"The campaign hitherto has only lasted a few weeks; yet in that time we have taken Landrecy, formerly considered as the key of France, and though we have lost Courtray and Menin, yet the vigour and resolution with which the whole Allied army has combated, gives good reason to hope, if not for a successful march to Paris, (which, however, is by no means improbable,) at least for such an addition to the frontier barrier as may prove at once a curb on France, and an excellent base for offensive operations.

* Afterwards Lord Liverpool.

It is impossible to say what government we are to propose for France in the event of the Jacobins being overthrown, because that must depend on the circumstances of the times, and the wishes of its inhabitants; but this much may safely be affirmed, that, with the sanguinary faction who now rule its councils, accommodation is impossible.

"The present is not a contest for distant or contingent objects: it is not a contest for power or glory: as little is it a contest for commercial advantage, or any particular form of government: it is a contest for the security, the tranquillity, and the very existence of Great Britain, connected with that of every established government, and every country in Europe. This was the object of the war from its commencement; and every hour tends more strongly to demonstrate its justice. In the outset, the internal anarchy of France, how distressing or alarming soever, was not deemed a sufficient ground for the hostile interference of this country: but could the same be affirmed, when the King was beheaded, and a revolutionary army, spreading everywhere the most dangerous doctrines, overwhelmed the whole Low Countries? Is that danger now at an end? The prospect of bringing the war to a conclusion, as well as the security for any engagements which we may form with France, must ultimately depend upon the destruction of those principles now triumphant in France, which are alike subversive of every regular government, and destructive of all good faith. We do not disclaim any interference in the internal affairs of that country; on the contrary, should an opportunity occur where it may be practised with advantage, we will not engage to abstain from it: we only say, that such is not the primary object of the contest; and that, if at-

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tempted, it will be, as has been the case in all former wars, considered as an operation of the war.

"There is no contradiction between the proclamation of Lord Hood at Toulon, and the declaration of his Majesty of 29th October. Both promise protection to such of the French as choose to declare for a constitutional monarchy; and to both we shall adhere. By entering into a negociation, we should give confidence and vigour to the French, and entirely dissolve the formidable confederacy formed to lower its ambition. While the present system continues in France we can have no peace, on any terms short of absolute ruin and dishonour: by an express law of their constitution, any Frenchman who shall enter into a negociation with this country, on any other terms, than surrendering our constitution, dethroning our virtuous Sovereign, and introducing into this country the horrible anarchy which prevails in their distracted state, is declared a traitor. Are we prepared to make such sacrifices to obtain the blessings of fraternization with the disciples of Robespierre? Nor let it be supposed that the colonial conquests we have made are of little moment in bringing about in the end a termination to this frightful contest. Is it of no moment in the first year of the war to have cut up these resources, and destroyed the sinews of their commerce? The injury to their revenues thence arising may not be felt during the continuance of the monstrous and gigantic expedients of finance to which they have had recourse; but it is not on that account the less real, or the less likely to be felt on the restoration of such a regular government as may afford us any chance of an accommodation." [1] On a division, the House, by a majority of two hundred and eight to fifty-five, supported the government. [2]

[1] Parl. Hist. xxxi. 632, 651.

[2] Ibid. 658.

The supplies voted by Parliament for the service of the year 1794, were proportioned to the increasing magnitude and importance of the strife in which the nation was engaged. For the service of the navy eighty-five thousand men were voted; thirty thousand men were added to the regular native army; and the total under arms in the British dominions, including fencibles and militia, raised to 140,000 men, besides forty thousand foreign soldiers employed on the Continent. These numbers were described by Mr Pitt as "unparalleled, and such as could hardly be exceeded;" such was the happy ignorance of those times in regard to the exertions of which a nation was capable. To meet these extraordinary exertions an income of L. 20,000,000, besides L. 11,800,000 for the charge of the debt, were required; and for this purpose a loan of L. 11,000,000 was voted by Parliament; so early in the contest was this ruinous system of laying upon posterity the burdens of the moment adopted.[1]

Supplies and Forces voted for the year 1794.

[1] Parl. Hist. xxx. 557, 563. Ann. Reg. 1794, 69,70.

Meanwhile, the ascendency of the English navy soon produced its wonted effects on the colonial possessions of their enemies. Soon after the commencement of hostilities, Tobago was taken by a British squadron; and in the beginning of March 1794, an expedition was fitted out against Martinique, which, after a vigorous resistance, fell on the 23d. Shortly after, the principal forts in St Domingo were wrested from the Republicans by the English forces, while the wretched planters, a prey to the flames lighted by Brissot and the friends of negro emancipation, at the commencement of the revolution, were totally ruined. No sooner was this success achieved, than the indefatigable English commander, Sir John Jarvis, and Sir Charles Grey, turned their arms against St Lucia, which was subjected to the British dominions on the 4th

April 1793.

March 23.

British Conquests in the West Indies.

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April. Guadaloupe was next attacked, and on the 25th, that fine island, with all its rich dependencies, was added to the list of the conquered colonies. Thus, in little more than a month, the French were entirely dispossessed of their West India possessions, with hardly any loss to the victorious nation.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 188, 337, 339, 340. Th. vi. 301, 302.

The once beautiful island of St Domingo meanwhile continued a prey to the frightful disorders arising from precipitate emancipation. "It had gone through," says the Republican historian, "the greatest succession of calamities of which history makes mention." The Whites had at first embraced with enthusiasm the cause of the Revolution, and the Mulattoes, to whom the Constituent Assembly had extended the gift of freedom, were not less attached to the principles of democracy, and openly aspired to dispossess the planters, by force, of those political privileges which had hitherto been their exclusive property. But, in the midst of these contests, the negroes had revolted against both, and without distinguishing friend from foe, applied the firebrand indiscriminately to every civilized dwelling. Distracted by these horrors, the Constituent Assembly at once declared them all free. From the moment that emancipation was announced, the colony became the theatre of the most horrible devastations; and the contending parties among the higher orders mutually threw upon each other the blame of having brought a frightful party into their contests, whose ravages were utterly destructive to both. In truth, it was owing to neither, but to the precipitate measures of emancipation, dictated by the ardent and inexperienced philanthropists of the Constituent Assembly; and which have consigned that unhappy colony, after thirty years of unexampled suffering, to a state of slavery,[2] under the

[2] Th. vi. 301. Mackenzie's St Domingo, 201. 232.

name of "The Rural Code," infinitely worse than that of the French planters. CHAP. XVI.

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In the Mediterranean also the power of the British navy was speedily felt. The disaster at Toulon having totally paralyzed the French navy in that quarter, the English fleet was enabled to carry the land forces, now rendered disposable, by the evacuation of Toulon, to whatever quarter they choose. Corsica was the selected point of attack, which early in 1794 had shown symptoms of revolt against the Republican authorities. Three thousand soldiers and marines were landed, and after some inconsiderable successes nearly effected the subjection of the island by the capture of the fortress of Bastia, which capitulated at the end of May. The only remaining stronghold of the Republicans, Calvi, was besieged until the 1st August, when it surrendered to the British arms. The crown of Corsica, offered by Paoli, and the aristocratical party, to the King of England, was accepted, and efforts immediately made to confer upon the inhabitants a constitution similar to that of Great Britain; a project about as practicable as it would have been to have clothed the British plains with the fruits which ripen under its sunny cliffs.[1]

And in the Mediterranean.

[1] Jom. v. 192. Ann. Reg. 1794, 340, 341.

But a more glorious triumph was awaiting the British arms. The French Government having, by great exertions, got twenty-six ships of the line into a state fit for service at Brest, and being extremely anxious to secure the arrival of a large fleet laden with provisions, which was approaching from America, and promised to relieve the famine which was now felt with uncommon severity in all parts of France, sent positive orders to Admiral Villaret Joyeuse to put to sea. On the 20th of May, the French set sail; and on the 28th, Lord Howe, who was well aware of the

Victory of the 1st June, by Admiral Howe.

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expected arrival of the convoy, hove in sight, with the Channel fleet of England, consisting of twenty-six line-of-battle ships. The French were immediately formed in line, in order of battle, and a partial action ensued between the rearguard of their line and the vanguard of the British squadron; in the course of which, the Revolutionaire was so much damaged that she struck to the Audacious, but not being taken possession of by the victors before night-fall, was towed the following morning into Rochefort. During the next day, the manœuvres were renewed on both sides, each party endeavouring to obtain the weather gage of the other; and Lord Howe, at the head of his fleet, passed through the French squadron; but the whole ships not having taken the position assigned to them, the action, after a severe commencement, was discontinued, and the British Admiral strove with the utmost skill to maintain the wind of the enemy. During the two following days, a thick fog concealed the rival fleets from each other, though they were so near, that both sides were well aware that a great battle was approaching, and with difficulty restrained the ardour by which they were animated.[1]

[1] Jom. v 284, 288. James, i. 205—219. Th. vi. 304. Ann. Reg. 1794, 342—343.

At length, on the 1st June, a day ever memorable in the naval annals of England, the sun broke forth with unusual splendour, and discovered the French fleet in order of battle, a few miles from the English, awaiting the combat, while an agitated sea promised the advantage of the wind to an immediate attack. Lord Howe instantly bore down, in an oblique direction, upon the enemy's line, designing to repeat the manœuvre long known in the British Navy, but first traced to scientific principles by Clerk of Eldin, and so successfully carried into execution by Rodney on the 12th April. Having the weather gage of the

enemy, he was enabled to break their line near the centre, and double with a preponderating force on the one-half of their squadron. The English Admiral, in the Queen Charlotte, engaged the Republican Commander in the Mountain, but such was the superiority of his fire, that before the combat had continued an hour, the French Admiral was compelled to fall out of the line with such of his ships as were able to move, leaving twelve in close action to their fate. Though overpowered by superior forces, they bravely maintained the combat, and several of the vessels on both sides were speedily dismasted, and lay like logs in the water. The heroism of the crew of the Vengeur is worthy of eternal remembrance; though sinking rapidly in the water, and after the lower deck guns were immersed, they continued vehemently to discharge the upper tier; and at length, when she went to the bottom, the crew continued to cheer, and the cries, "Vive la Republique," "Vive la Liberté," "Vive la France," were heard as she was swallowed up in the waves.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 344. Jom. v. 290. Th. vi. 305. Toul. iv. 247. James, i. 215, 217.

So severely was the British fleet injured, that several of the vessels which had struck escaped, and two or three even under a sprit-sail, or a small sail raised on the stump of a foremast, could not be detained. Six ships of the line, however, beside the Vengeur, which sunk, remained in the possession of the British Admiral, and were brought into Plymouth; while the remains of the French squadron, diminished by eight of their number, and with a loss of eight thousand men, took refuge in the roads of Berthaume, and ultimately regained the harbour of Brest, shattered, dismasted, riddled with shot: how different from the splendid fleet which had so recently departed amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants! The loss of the British was two hundred and ninety killed,[2] and eight hundred

[2] Jom. v. 290. Toul iv. 248. Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 34. James, i. 217.

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and fifty-eight wounded, in all eleven hundred and forty-eight, being less than that sustained in the six French ships alone which were made prizes.

The Republicans were in some degree consoled for this disaster, by the safe arrival of the great American convoy, consisting of one hundred and sixty sail, and valued at L. 5,000,000 sterling; a supply of incalculable importance to the wants of a population whom the Reign of Terror and civil dissension had brought to the verge of famine. They entered the harbour of Brest a few days after the engagement, having escaped, as if by a miracle, the vigilance of the British cruisers. Their safety was in a great degree owing to the sagacity of the Admiral, who traversed the scene of destruction a day or two after the engagement, and judging from the magnitude and number of the wrecks which were floating about, that a terrible battle must have taken place, concluded, that the victorious party would not be in a condition for pursuit, and resolved to hold on his course for the French harbour.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 291.

Tactics by which the Victory was gained.

Lord Howe gained so decisive a success from the adoption of the same principle, which gave victory to Frederic at Leuthen, to Napoleon at Austerlitz, and Wellington at Salamanca, viz. to bring an overwhelming force to one point, and reduce one-half of the enemy's fleet to be the passive spectator of the destruction of the other.[2] To a skilful and intrepid squadron, who do not fear to engage at the cannon mouth with their enemy, such a manœuvre offers even greater chances of success at sea than at land, because the complete absence of obstacles on the level expanse of water enables the attacking squadron to calculate with more certainty upon reaching their object; and the advantage of the wind, if once obtained, renders it propor-

[2] Jom. v. 288. Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 344.

tionally difficult for one part of the enemy's line to be brought up to the relief of the other.

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Never was a victory more seasonable, than Lord Howe's, to the British Government. The war, preceded as it had been by violent party divisions in England, had been regarded with lukewarm feelings by a large portion of the people; and the friends of freedom dared not wish for the success of the British arms, lest it should extinguish the dawn of liberty in the world. But the Reign of Terror had shocked the best feelings of all the respectable portion of this party, and the victory of 1st June captivated the affections of the giddy multitude. The ancient but half extinguished loyalty of the British people wakened at the sound of their victorious cannon; and the hereditary rivalry of the two nations revived at so signal a triumph over the Republican arms. From this period may be dated the commencement of that firm union among the inhabitants of the country, and that ardent enthusiasm in the contest, which soon extinguished the seeds of former dissension, and ultimately carried the British empire triumphant through the severest struggles which had engaged the nation since the days of Alfred.[1]

Its great moral effect in England.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1794, p 282, 283.

Immense were the preparations for war made by the Committee of Public Safety in France. Her territory resembled an immense camp; the decrees of the 23d August and 5th September, had precipitated the whole youth of the Republic to the frontiers, and 1,200,000 men in arms, were prepared to obey the sovereign mandates of the Convention. After deducting from this immense force the garrisons, the troops destined to the service of the interior, and the sick, upwards of 700,000 were ready to act on the offensive, a force much greater than all the European Monar-

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chies could bring forward to meet them. These enormous armies, though in part but little experienced, were greatly improved in discipline since the conclusion of the preceding campaign; the months of winter had been sedulously employed in instructing them in the rudiments of the military art; the glorious successes at the close of the year had revived the spirit of conquest among the soldiers, and the whole were directed by a central government, possessing, in the highest degree, the advantage of unity of action and consummate military talent.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 28, 30. Th. vi. 271, 272. Ann. Reg. 1794, 322.

Wielding at command so immense a military force, the Committee of Public Safety were prodigal of the blood of their soldiers. To advance incessantly to the attack, to bring up column after column, till the enemy were wearied out, or overpowered, to regard as nothing any losses which led to the advance of Republican standards, were the maxims on which they conducted the war. No other power could venture upon such an expenditure of life, because none had such inexhaustible resources at their disposal. Money and men abounded in every quarter; the camps were overflowing with conscripts, the fortresses with artillery; the treasury with assignats. The preceding campaign had cost above L. 100,000,000 sterling, but the resources of government were undiminished. Three-fourths of the whole property of France was at its disposal; and on this vast fund a paper currency was issued, possessing a forced circulation, and amply sufficient for the most prodigal expenditure. The value of assignats in circulation in the course of the year 1794, was not less than L. 200,000,000 sterling, and there was no appearance of its diminution.[2] The rapid depreciation of this paper, arising from the enormous profusion with which it was issued, was nothing

[2] Ann. Reg. 1794, 324, 345. Toul. iv. 321. Jom. v. 30.

to a power which enforced its mandates by the guillotine; the government creditor was compelled to receive it at par, and it signified nothing to them though he lost his whole fortune in the next exchange with any citizen of the Republic.

Talent with which it was wielded.

What rendered this force still more formidable, was the ability with which it was conducted, and the talent which was evidently rising up among its ranks. The genius of Carnot had from the very commencement selected the officers of greatest talent from among the multitude, who presented themselves; and their rapid transference from one situation to another, gave ample opportunities for discovering who were the men on whom reliance could really be placed.[1] The whole talent of France, in consequence of the extinction of civil employment, was centred in the army, and indefatigable exertions everywhere made to communicate to headquarters the names of the young men who had distinguished themselves in any grade. The central government, guided by that able statesman, had discovered the real secret of military operations, and by accumulating an overwhelming force upon one part of the enemy's line, soon acquired a decided superiority over the Austrians, who adhered with blind obstinacy to the system of extending their forces. In the prosecution of this system, the French had peculiar advantages, from the unity of their government, the central situation of their forces, the interior line on which they acted, the fortified towns which guarded their frontier, and the unbounded means of repairing losses, which they possessed; while the Allies, acting on an exterior circle, paralysed by divisions among their sovereigns, and at a distance from their resources, were unable either to combine for any vigorous offensive operations, or render each other any assistance when

[1] Carnot's Memoirs, 32.

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pressed by the enemy. Incredible efforts were made at the same time to organize and equip this prodigious body of soldiers. "A Revolution," said Barrere, "must rapidly supply all our wants. It is to the human mind what the sun of Africa is to vegetation. Monarchies require peace, but a Republic can exist only in warlike energy: slaves have need of repose, but freemen of the fermentation of freedom; regular governments of rest, but the French Republic of revolutionary activity." The Ecole Militaire was speedily re-established; and the youth of the better classes marched on foot from all parts of France, to be there instructed in the rudiments of the military art; one horse out of twenty-five was everywhere levied, and the proprietor paid only nine hundred francs in paper, hardly equivalent, from its depreciation, to a louis in gold. By these means, however, the cavalry and artillery were furnished with horses, and a considerable body of educated young men rapidly provided for the army. The manufactories of arms at Paris, and in the provinces, were kept in incessant activity; artificial means universally adopted for the production of saltpetre, and gunpowder in immense quantities daily forwarded to the armies.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 247—272. Jom. v. 32. Carnot, 32. Hard. ii. 457.

Indefatigable were the exertions made by Mr Pitt to provide a force on the part of the Allies capable of combating this gigantic foe; and never were the efforts of his master spirit more required to heal the divisions and extinguish the jealousies which had arisen in the coalition. Poland was the apple of discord which had called forth these separate interests and awakened these jealousies; and in the plans of aggrandizement which they were all pursuing in regard to that unhappy state, is to be found the true secret of their neglect of the great task of combating the French Re-

volution, and of its rapid and early success. Prussia, intent on territorial acquisition on the shores of the Vistula, and desirous above every thing of securing Dantzic, the key to that stream, and the great emporium of the grain commerce in the north of Europe, had already assembled forty thousand men under the King in person for the siege of Warsaw; and the cabinet of Berlin, unable to bear at the same time the expense of a costly war on the eastern and western frontiers of the Monarchy, had in consequence greatly diminished their forces on the Rhine, and openly announced their intention of reducing them to the contingent which they were bound to furnish as a member of the empire, which was only twenty thousand men. Orders had even been despatched to Marshal Moellendorf, who commanded their army on the Rhine, to retreat by divisions towards the Elbe; while, at the same time, with preposterous inconsistency, Frederic William addressed a letter to the Arch-Chancellor of the Empire, in which he bewailed in piteous terms the public danger, and urged the immediate convocation of the anterior circles to deliberate on the most effectual means of withstanding the Revolutionary torrent with which they were menaced.[1]*

March 11, 1794.

Jan. 31, 1794.

1 Hard. ii. 488, 499.

* "As it is impossible for me," said the King in that letter, "any longer to continue at my own charges a war so remote from the frontiers of my dominions, and attended with so heavy an expense, I have candidly explained my situation to the principal Allied Powers, and engaged in negociations with them which are still in dependence. I am, in consequence, under the necessity of applying to the empire, to provide for the costs of my army, if its longer continuance on the theatre of war is deemed essential to the common defence. I implore your Excellency, therefore, that, in your quality of Arch-Chancellor of the Empire, you will forthwith convoke the anterior circles. An immediate provision for my troops at the expense of these circles, is the only means which remain of saving the empire in the terrible crisis which is approaching; and, unless that step is forthwith taken, they can no longer be employed in the common cause, and I must order

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The cabinet of Vienna were greatly alarmed at this official declaration of the intention of the Prussian government to withdraw from the coalition, and their chagrin was not diminished by the clear perception which they had, that this untimely and discreditable defection was mainly prompted by a desire to secure a share in the partition of Poland, of which they saw little prospect of their being allowed to participate. They used the most pressing instances, therefore, to induce the cabinet of Berlin to recall their resolution, offered to take a large portion of the Prussian troops into their own pay, provided the other states of Germany would take upon themselves the charges of the remainder, and even urged the immediate formation of a levy *en masse* in all the circles of the empire, immediately threatened with invasion, in order to combat the redoubtable forces which France was pouring forth from all ranks of her population. Austria, however, though so desirous to stimulate others to these last and convulsive efforts, made no attempt to rouse their emulation by setting the example of similar armaments herself; not a regiment was added to the Imperial armies; and the Prussian cabinet, little solicitous to behold the whole population of the empire combating under the banners of the Cæsars, strenuously resisted the proposal as useless, dangerous, and utterly inconsistent with the principles of the contest in which they were engaged.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 481, 488 Jom. v. 29. Th. vi. 269.

It soon appeared how ruinous to the common cause this unexpected secession of Prussia would become. The Republican forces in Flanders were nearly 160,000 strong; and Mack, who was entrusted with the chief direction of the campaign by the Allied Powers, finding that the whole forces which the allies could assem-

[2] Hard. ii. 488, 490.

them, with regret, to bend their steps towards their own frontier, leaving the empire to its own resources."[2]

ble in that quarter would not exceed 150,000, had strongly urged the necessity of obtaining the co-operation of fifty thousand Prussians, in order to cover the Meuse, in conjunction with the Austrian divisions in the neighbourhood of Luxembourg. The Prussians under Moellendorf were cantoned on the two banks of the Seltz, between Oppenheim and Mayence; but when he received the letter from Prince Cobourg requesting his co-operation, he replied in cold and ambiguous terms, "That he was not acquainted with the share which his government may have taken in the formation of the proposed plan of operations: that the views on which it was founded appeared unexceptionable, but that in the existing state of affairs it was attended with obvious inconveniences, and that he could not consent to the march to Treves, lest he should expose Mayence."[1]

CHAP. XVI. 1794. March 14. [1] Hard. ii. 480, 481.

These declarations of the intentions of Prussia excited the greater sensation in Europe, that ever since the war began it had been supposed that the cabinets of Berlin and Vienna were united in the closest bands of alliance, and the Convention of Pilnitz was universally regarded as the true basis of the anti-revolutionary coalition. The confederacy appeared to be on the verge of dissolution. Stimulated by the pressing dangers of his situation, the Elector of Mayence, who stood in the front rank of the Germanic Powers, proved indefatigable in his efforts to promote the withdrawing of the Prussian troops, and by his exertions a proposition was favourably received by the diet of the empire, for taking the Prussian troops into the pay of the lesser powers, and the Marshal Moellendorf soon after received orders to suspend his retreat.[2]

March 20. April 7. [2] Hard. ii. 501, 502.

This change in the Prussian plans arose from the vast exertions which Mr Pitt at this period made to

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hold together the bands of the confederacy. Alone of all the statesmen of his day, the English minister perceived the full extent of the danger which menaced Europe from the spreading of the revolutionary torrent over the adjoining states, and the immense peril of this speedily coming to pass from the divisions and distraction of interests which were breaking out among the Allied Powers. No sooner, therefore, was he informed of the intended defection of Prussia, than he exerted all his influence to bring back the cabinet of Berlin to more rational sentiments, and liberally advanced the treasures of England to retain the Prussian troops in a contest so vital to none as to Prussia

April 19.

herself. By his exertions a treaty was signed at the Hague between Prussia, Holland, and Great Britain; by which it was stipulated that Prussia should retain an army of sixty-two thousand veterans in the field; while the two latter should furnish a subsidy of L. 50,000 a-month, besides L. 400,000 for putting the army into a fit condition to undertake a campaign, and L. 1, 12s. a-month to each man as an equivalent for the expenses of his maintenance while engaged in active service. By a separate article, it was provided, "that all conquests made by this army, shall be made in the names of the two maritime powers, and shall remain at their disposal during the course of the war, and at the peace shall be made such use of as they shall deem proper."[1]

[1] Parl. Hist. xxxi. 434, 435. Hard. ii. 504, 505.

However meritorious were the exertions of Mr Pitt, in thus again bringing Prussia into the field, after its government had formally announced their intention of withdrawing from the confederacy, it was in part foreseen * what the event soon demonstrated, that the

* It was asked in the House of Peers, with a too prophetic spirit by the Marquis of Lansdown, "Could the King of Prussia, ought the

succours stipulated from Prussia, would prove of the most inefficient description, and that nothing was to be expected from the troops of a leading power engaged as hirelings contrary to the national feelings, and the secret inclinations of the government, in what they deemed a foreign cause. The discontent of the troops was loudly proclaimed when it transpired that they were to be transferred to the pay of Great Britain; and they openly murmured at the disgrace of having the soldiers of the great Frederick sold like mercenaries to a foreign power.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 504, 507.

General Mack, whose subsequent and unexampled misfortunes should not exclude the recollection of the abilities in a particular department which he really possessed, was entrusted by the Austrian and English governments with the preparation of the plan of the campaign; and he proposed one which bore the marks of decided talent, and which, if vigorously carried into effect by a sufficient force, still promised the most brilliant results. This was to complete the opening into the French barrier by the capture of Landrecy; and, having done so, march with the whole Allied army in Flanders, 160,000 strong, straight by Laon on Paris; while the Prussian forces, by a forward movement on the side of Namur, supported the operation. "With 150,000 men," said he, "I would push forward a strong advanced guard to Paris; with

King of Prussia to divest himself of his natural duties? Could it be expected that he would fulfil engagements so trivial in comparison? Was not Poland likely to furnish him employment for his troops, and that, too, at his own door? There never were two powers hated one another more cordially than Prussia and Austria, and were English guineas likely to allay the discord? Was it not probable that Frederick William would take our subsidies, but find pretexts for evading the performance of anything in return worthy of the name."—Parl. Hist. xxxi. 456, 458.

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200,000 I would engage to remain there." He proposed that West Flanders should be inundated by troops at the same time, so that the main army, in the course of its perilous advance, should have no disquietude for its flank and rear. This plan was ably conceived, and was evidently the one which should have been adopted in the preceding campaign: but it proved abortive, from the strong remonstrances of the inhabitants of West Flanders against a measure which promised to render their province the theatre of war, and the jealousy of the Prussian government, which precluded any effectual co-operation from being obtained on that side of the line, and left the whole weight of the contest on the Austrians and English, whose forces were not of sufficient numerical strength for the struggle.[1] *

[1] Hard. ii. 478, 528, 529.

Unaware of the immense military resources and ascending spirit of their adversaries, the Allies resolved to capture Landrecy, and from that base march directly to Paris. Preparatory to this movement, their whole army was, on the 16th April, reviewed by the Emperor of Austria on the Plains of Cateau; they amounted nearly to 150,000 men, and were particularly distinguished by the superb appearance of the cavalry, constituting a force apparently capable of conquering the world. Instead of profiting by this immense assemblage of strength to fall upon the still

Plan of Allies. Landrecy taken.

Forces on both sides.

* The armies were disposed as follows:—

FRENCH.		ALLIES.	
Army of the North	220,000	Flanders,	140,000
Moselle and Rhine	280,000	Duke of York	40,000
Alps	60,000	Austrians on the Rhine	60,000
Eastern Pyrenees	80,000	Prussians on ditto	65,000
Western ditto	80,000	Luxembourg	20,000
South	60,000	Emigrants	12,000
	780,000		337,000[2]

[2] Jom. v. 29, 32, Ann. Reg. 1794, 322.

scattered forces of their enemies, the troops were on the following day divided into eight columns, to oppose the French forces, which were still divided in that manner. The siege of Landrecy was shortly after formed, while a large portion of the Allied Army was stationed as a covering force. After ten days of open trenches, and a most severe bombardment, which almost totally destroyed the town, this important fortress capitulated, and the garrison, consisting of five thousand men, was made prisoners of war.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 522. Ann. Reg. 1793, p 328, 330. Jom. v. 34, 58. Th. vi. 270, 285.

During the progress of this attack, the French Generals, stimulated by the orders of the Committee of Public Safety, made reiterated efforts to raise the siege. Their endeavours were much aided by the absurd adherence of the Allies to the old plan of dividing their forces; they trembled at the thoughts of leaving a single road open, as if the fate of the war depended upon closing every avenue into Flanders, when they were contemplating a march to Paris. The plan of the Republicans consisted in a series of attacks on the posts and corps forming the long cordon of the Allies, followed by a serious advance of the two wings, the one towards Philipville, the other Dunkirk. On the 26th April, the movement in advance took place along the whole line. The centre, which advanced against the Duke of York near Cambray, experienced the most bloody reverses. When the Republicans arrived at the redoubts of Troisville, defended by the Duke of York; they were vigorously assailed by the English Guards in front, supported by PRINCE SCHWARTZENBERG, commanding a regiment of Austrian cuirassiers, while General Otto charged them in flank at the head of the English cavalry, and completed their rout. The whole corps were driven back in confusion to Cambray, with the loss of thirty-five pieces of cannon, and above four

Efforts of the Republicans to raise the Siege.

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thousand men. While this disaster was experienced on the left of the French army, their centre was not more successful. They at first gained some advantages over the corps of the Austrians, who there composed the covering force; but the latter having been reinforced, and supported by a numerous artillery, resumed the offensive, and repulsed the assailants with great loss.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 55, 57. Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 329. Th. vi. 286, 287.

Defeat of Clairfait.

But these advantages, how considerable soever, were counterbalanced by a severe check experienced by General Clairfait, whose corps formed the extreme right of the Allied line. On that side the Republicans had assembled fifty thousand men, under Souham and Moreau, which, on the 25th April, advanced against the Austrian forces. Assailed by superior numbers, Clairfait was driven back to Tournay, with the loss of thirty pieces of cannon and twelve hundred prisoners. His retreat seemed to render wholly desperate the situation of a brigade of three thousand Hanoverians, now shut up in Menin, and soon furiously bombarded. But their brave commander, supported by the resolution of a large body of French emigrants who were attached to his corps, resolved to cut his way through the besiegers, and through the heroic valour of his followers successfully accomplished his object. Prince Cobourg, upon the intelligence of this misfortune, detached the Duke of York to Tournay to support Clairfait, and remained with the rest of his forces in the neighbourhood of Landrecy, to put that place in a state of defence.[2]

[2] Jom. v. 61, 62. Th. vi. 288, 289.

Jourdan ordered up from the Rhine to the Sambre.

Convinced by the failure of their attacks on the centre of the Allies, that their forces were insufficient in that quarter, the Committee of Public Safety, relying on the inactivity and lukewarmness of the Prussians on the extreme right, took the energetic resolu-

tion of ordering Jourdan to reinforce the army of the Moselle with fifteen thousand men drawn from the Rhine, and after leaving a corps of observation at Luxembourg, to march with forty-five thousand men upon the Ardenne Forest, and unite himself to the army on the Sambre. This bold resolution of strengthening to an overwhelming degree, what appeared the decisive point of the long line of operations, and throwing ninety thousand men on the extreme left of the enemy, had a most important effect on the future fate of the campaign; and formed a striking contrast to the measures of the Allies, who deemed themselves insecure, even when meditating offensive operations, unless the whole avenues of the country they occupied were equally guarded by detached corps. The defection of Prussia, which daily became more evident, prevented them from obtaining any co-operation on the left flank, to counteract this change in the enemy's line of attack, while, even in their own part of the line, the movements were vacillating, and totally unworthy of the splendid force at their disposal.[1]

[1] Th. vi. 290. Jom. v. 62, 63. Hard. ii. 532.

Various indecisive Actions on the Sambre.

On the 10th May, Clairfait, without any co-operation from the other parts of the line, crossed the Lys, and attacked the Republican troops around the town of Cambray. An obstinate engagement ensued, with various success, which was continued on the succeeding day, without any decisive advantage having been gained by either party. Four thousand men were lost on each side, and the opposing forces remained much where they had been at their commencement; a striking proof of the murderous and indecisive nature of this warfare of posts, which, without any adequate success, occasioned an incessant consumption of human life.[2]

[2] Toul. iv. 320. Jom. v. 66. Th. vi. 291.

But the period was now approaching when the ge-

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nius of Carnot was to infuse a new element into this indecisive warfare. On the 10th May, the French army on the Sambre, crossed that river, with the design of executing his plan of operations; but the Allies having collected their forces to cover the important city of Mons, and taken post at a fortified position at Grandrengs, a furious battle ensued, which terminated in the Republicans being defeated and driven across the Sambre with the loss of ten pieces of cannon, and four thousand men. But the French having remained masters of their bridges over the river, and being urged by St Just and Le Bas, again crossed on the 20th, and returned to the charge. But they preserved so bad a look out, that, on the 24th, they were surprised and completely routed by the Austrians, under Prince Kaunitz. The whole army was flying in confusion to the bridges, when KLEBER arrived in time with fresh troops to arrest the victorious enemy, and preserve his army from total destruction. As it was, however, they were a second time driven over the Sambre, with the loss of four thousand men, and twenty-five pieces of artillery.[1]

French driven across the Sambre.

24th May.

[1] Jom. v. 79, 83, 85. Toul. iv. 322. Th. vi. 292. An. Reg. 1794, 331.

While blood was flowing in such torrents on the banks of the Sambre, events of still greater importance occurred in West Flanders. The Allies had there collected ninety thousand men, including one hundred and thirty-three squadrons, under the immediate command of the Emperor; and the situation of the left wing of the French suggested the design of cutting it off from the main body of the army, and forcing it back upon the sea, where it could have no alternative but to surrender. For this purpose, their troops were divided into six columns, which were moved by concentric lines on the French corps posted at Turcoing. Had they acted with more concert, and moved on a

Battle of Turcoing.

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better line, the attack would have been crowned with the most splendid success; but the old system of dividing their forces made it terminate in nothing but disaster. The different columns, some of which were separated from each other by no less than twenty leagues, did not arrive simultaneously at the point of attack; and although each singly acted vigorously when brought into action, there was not the unity in their operations requisite to success. Some inconsiderable advantages were gained near Turcoing on the 17th, but the Republicans having now concentrated their troops in a central position, were enabled to fall with an overwhelming force on the insulated columns of their adversaries. At three in the morning of the 18th, General Souham, with forty-five thousand, attacked the detached corps of General Otto and the Duke of York, while another corps of fifteen thousand advanced against them from the side of Lisle; the first was defeated with great loss; the latter, though it at first defended itself with vigour, finding its communication cut off with the remainder of the army, and surrounded by a greatly superior force, disbanded and took to flight; a circumstance which ultimately proved fortunate, as, had they maintained their ground, they certainly would have been made prisoners. So sudden was the rout, that the Duke of York himself owed his safety to the fleetness of his horse; a circumstance which, much to his credit, he had the candour to admit in his official dispatch. Such was the defect of the combinations of Prince Cobourg, that at the time that his central columns were thus overwhelmed by an enormous mass of sixty thousand men, the two columns on the left, amounting to not less than thirty thousand, under the Arch-duke Charles and Kinsky, remained in a state of absolute inaction; and Clair-

16th May.

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fait, with seventeen thousand on the right, who came up too late to take any active part in the engagement, was obliged to retire, after capturing seven pieces of cannon; a poor compensation for the total rout of the centre, and the moral disadvantages of a defeat. In this action, where the Allies lost three thousand men, and sixty pieces of cannon, the superiority of the French generalship was very apparent; inferior, upon the whole, to the number of their opponents, they had greatly the advantage in point of numbers at the point of attack; but after having pierced the centre, they should have reaped something more from their victory, than the bare possession of the field of battle.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 86, 97, 98. Toul. iv. 322. Ann. Reg. 1794, 332. Th. vi. 295, 296. Hard. ii. 536-7.

On the 22d May, Pichegru, who now assumed the command, renewed the attack, with a force now raised by successive additions to nearly 100,000 men, with the intention of forcing the passage of the Scheldt, besieging Tournay, and capturing a convoy which was ascending that river. They at first succeeded in driving in the outposts; but a reinforcement of English troops, commanded by General Fox, and seven Austrian battalions, having arrived to support the Hanoverians in that quarter, a desperate and bloody conflict ensued, in which the firmness of the English at length prevailed over the impetuosity of their adversaries, and the village of Pont-a-chin, which was the point of contest between them, finally remained in their hands. The battle continued from five in the morning till nine at night, when it terminated by a general charge of the Allies, which drove the enemy from the field.* In this battle, which was one of the

May 22.

Fresh indecisive Actions.

* The Emperor Francis was on horseback for twelve hours during this bloody day, incessantly traversing the ranks, and animating the soldiers to continue their exertions.—"Courage, my friends," said he, when they appeared about to sink, "yet a few more exertions, and the victory is our own."—Hard. ii. 538.

most obstinately contested of the campaign, the French lost above six thousand men; but such was the fatigue of the victors, after an engagement of such severity and duration, that they were unable to follow up their success. Twenty thousand men had fallen on the two sides in these murderous battles, but no decisive advantage, and hardly a foot of ground been gained by either party.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 333. Jom. v. 98, 99–104. Th. vi. 297. Hard. ii. 537, 538.

Finding that he could make no impression in this quarter, Pichegru resolved to carry the theatre of war into West Flanders, where the country, intersected by hedges, was less favourable to the Allied cavalry, and he, in consequence, laid siege to Ipres. About the same time, the Emperor conducted ten thousand men in person, to reinforce the army on the Sambre, and the right wing of the Allies thus weakened, remained in a defensive position near Tournay, which was fortified with the utmost care.[2]

[2] Jom. v. 104. Toul. iv. 322.

The indecisive result of these bloody actions, which clearly demonstrated the great strength of the Republicans, and the desperate strife which awaited the allies, in any attempt to conquer a country, abounding in such defenders, produced an important change in the Austrian councils. Thugut, who was essentially patriotic in his ideas, and reluctantly embarked in any contest which did not evidently conduce to the advantage of the hereditary states, had long nourished a secret aversion to the war in Flanders. He could not disguise from himself that these provinces, how opulent and important soever in themselves, contributed little to the real strength of the monarchy: that their situation, far removed from Austria, and close to France, rendered it highly probable, that they would, at some no very distant period, become the prey of that enterprising power; and that the charge of defend-

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ing them at so great a distance from Vienna, entailed an enormous and ruinous expense upon the Imperial finances. Impressed with these ideas, he had for some time been revolving in his mind the project of abandoning these distant provinces to their fate, and looking out for a compensation to Austria in Italy or Bavaria, where its new acquisition might lie adjacent to the hereditary states. This long remained a fixed principle in the Imperial councils: and in these vague ideas is to be found the remote cause of the treaty of Campo-Formio, and partition of Venice.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 539, 540.

May 24, 1794.

Two days after the battle of Turcoing, a council of state was secretly held at the Imperial head-quarters, to deliberate on the measures to be pursued for the future progress of the war. The opportunity appeared favourable to that able statesman to bring forward his favourite project. The inactivity and lukewarmness of the Prussians, notwithstanding the English subsidy, too plainly demonstrated that no reliance could be placed on their co-operation; the recent desperate actions in West Flanders sufficiently proved that no serious impression was to be made in that quarter; while the reluctance of the Flemish states to contribute any thing to the common cause, and the evident partiality of a large party amongst them for the French alliance, rendered it a matter of great doubt whether it was expedient for such distant, fickle, and disaffected subjects to maintain any longer a contest, which, if unsuccessful, might engulf half the forces of the monarchy. These considerations were forcibly impressed upon the mind of the young Emperor, who, born and bred in Tuscany, entertained no partiality for his distant Flemish possessions; Mack supported them with all the weight of his opinion, and strongly urged that it was better to retire alto-

gether across the Rhine, while yet the strength of the army was unbroken, than run the risk of its being buried in the fields of Belgium. If Flanders was of such value to the cause of European independence, it lay upon England, Prussia, and Holland, in the centre of whose dominions it lay, to provide measures for its defence: but the real interests of Austria lay nearer home, and her battalions required to be seen in dense array on the maritime Alps, or on the shores of the Vistula, where vast and fertile provinces were about to fall a prey to her ambitious neighbours. Should affairs in that quarter assume a favourable aspect, and the revolutionary fervour of the Republic exhaust itself, it would apparently be no difficult matter to recover the Belgic provinces, as Dumourier had done in the preceding campaign; or if this should unhappily prove impossible, it was much more likely that a successful defensive war could be maintained with the resources of the empire concentrated round its heart, than when they were so largely accumulated in a distant possession: or if peace became desirable, it could at any time be readily purchased by the cession of provinces so valuable to France, and the acquisition of an equivalent nearer the Austrian dominions.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 539-543.

The subject was debated with the deliberation which its importance deserved; and it was at length determined by the majority of the council, that the maintenance of so burdensome and hazardous a war for such disaffected and distinct possessions, was contrary to the vital interests of the state. It was resolved, accordingly, that the Imperial troops should, as soon as decency would permit, be withdrawn from Flanders; that this resolution should in the meantime be kept a profound secret, and to cover the honour of the Imperial arms, a general battle should be hazard-

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ed, and on its issue should depend the course which should thereafter be adopted; but that in the meantime the Emperor should forthwith depart for Vienna, to take cognizance of the affairs of Poland, which called for instant attention. In conformity with this resolution, he set out shortly after, leaving Cobourg in command of the army.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 543, 545

French again cross the Sambre. 26th May.

Meanwhile, the Commissioners of the Convention, little anticipating the favourable turn which their affairs were about to take from the divisions of the Allies, nothing daunted by the reverses the army of the Sambre had experienced, were continually stimulating its generals to fresh exertions. In vain they represented, that the soldiers, worn out with fatigue, without shoes, without clothing, stood much in need of repose; "To-morrow," said St Just, "the Republic must have a victory; choose between a battle and a siege." Constrained by authorities who enforced their arguments with the guillotine, the Republican generals prepared for a third expedition across the Sambre. Towards the end of May, Kleber made the attempt with troops still exhausted by fatigue, and almost starving; the consequences were such as might have been expected; the grenadiers were repulsed, by the grape-shot of the enemy, and General Duhesme was routed with little difficulty. On the 29th, however, the indomitable Republicans returned to the charge, and after an obstinate engagement, succeeded in forcing back the Imperialists, and immediately formed the investment of Charleroi. But the arrival of the Emperor with ten thousand troops, having raised the Allied Force in that quarter to thirty-five thousand men, it was resolved to make an effort to raise the siege before Jourdan arrived with the army of the Moselle, who was hourly expected. The attack

Invest Charleroi, and are driven back. June 3.

was made on the 3d June, and attended with complete success; the French having been driven across the Sambre, with the loss of two thousand men. But this check was of little importance; on the day following Jourdan arrived from the Moselle with forty thousand fresh troops.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 322. Jom. v. 103, 109, 113.

This great reinforcement thrown into the scale, when the contending parties were so nearly balanced, was decisive of the fate of the campaign, and proves the sagacity with which Carnot acted in accumulating an overwhelming force on this point. In a few days the Republicans recrossed the river with sixty thousand men, resumed the siege of Charleroi, and soon destroyed a strong redoubt which constituted the principal defence of the besieged. The imminent danger to which the city was reduced by the attack of this great force, induced the Allies to make the utmost efforts to raise the siege. But this required no less skill than intrepidity, for their army did not exceed thirty-five thousand men, while the French were nearly double that number. On this occasion, the system of attack by detached columns, was successful; the Republicans were pierced by a concentric effort of two of their columns, defeated, and driven over the Sambre, with the loss of three thousand men. This success, highly honourable as it was to the Austrian arms, proved in the end prejudicial to their cause, as it induced Prince Cobourg to suppose that his left wing was now sufficiently secure, and to detach all his disposable troops to the succour of Clairfait and Ipres on the right, whereas it was against the other flank that the principal forces of the Republicans were now directed.[2]

Arrival of Jourdan with 40,000 men.

12th June.

16th June.

[2] Jom. v. 132. Th. vi. 395. Ann. Reg. 1794, 333.

In effect, on the 18th June, the French army recrossed the Sambre for the fifth, and commenced the

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bombardment of Charleroi for the third time. The great force with which this attack was made, amounting to seventy thousand men, rendered it evident that Prince Cobourg had mistaken the point which required support, and that it was on the Sambre, and under the walls of Charleroi, that the decisive battle for the protection of Flanders was to be fought. Accordingly, the major part of the Allied Forces were at length moved in that direction; the Duke of York, with the English and Hanoverians, being alone left on the Scheldt, at a short distance from Clairfait, who had recently experienced the most overwhelming reverses. This separation of the forces of the two nations, contributed not a little to augment the misunderstanding which already prevailed between them, and was the forerunner of numberless disasters to both monarchies.[1]

Sambre again crossed, and Charleroi reinvested.

Separation of the Austrians and English.

[1] Jom. v. 133. Th. vi. 397. Ann. Reg. 1794, 333.

No sooner was the departure of the Emperor with reinforcements to the army on the Sambre known to Pichegru, than he resolved to take advantage of the weakness of his adversaries, by prosecuting seriously the long menaced siege of Ipres. Clairfait not feeling himself in sufficient strength to interrupt his operations, remained firm in his intrenched camp at Thielt. An attempted movement of the centre of the Allied Army to his support, having been betrayed to the enemy at Lisle, was prevented from being carried into effect by a demonstration from the French centre by Pichegru. The consequence was, that the Austrian general was compelled to attack alone, and though his corps fought with their wonted valour he was again worsted, and compelled to resume his position in his intrenchments, without having disturbed the operations of the siege. This was the fifth time that this brave officer had fought alone, while thirty thousand Austrians lay inactive at Tournay, and six thousand English were

Pichegru attacks Clairfait.

17th June.

reposing from the fatigues of their sea voyage at Ostend. The consequence was, that Ipres capitulated a few days after, and its garrison, consisting of six thousand men, were made prisoners of war. Cobourg made a tardy movement for its relief, but hearing of its fall, returned on the 19th to Tournay.[1]

[1] Ann Reg. 1794, p. 334. Jom. v. 119. 121, 134. Th. vi. 393. 394.

The Austrians having now, in pursuance of their plan of withdrawing from Flanders, finally detached themselves from the English, moved all their forces towards their left wing, with a view to succour Charleroi, which was severely pressed by Jourdan. On the 22d Prince Cobourg joined his left wing, but though their united forces were seventy-five thousand strong, he delayed till the 26th to attack the French army. Jourdan, who was fully aware of the importance of acquiring this fortress, took advantage of the respite which this delay afforded him to prosecute the siege with the utmost activity. This he did with such success, that the batteries of the besieged having been silenced, the place capitulated on the evening of the 25th. Hardly had the garrison left the gates, when the discharge of artillery announced the tardy movement of the Austrians for its relief. The battle took place on the following day, on the plains of FLEURUS, already signalized by a victory of Marshal Luxembourg in 1690, and was one of the most important of the whole war.[2]

22d June. Imperialists assemble to succour Charleroi.

25th June.

26th June.

[2] Jom. v. 137. Ann. Reg. 1794, 334. Th. vi. 395, 396.

The French army, which was eighty-nine thousand strong, was posted in a semicircle round the town of Charleroi, now become, instead of a source of weakness, a *point d'appui* to the Republicans. Their position very nearly resembled that of Napoleon at Leipsic; but the superiority of force, on that occasion, secured a very different result to the Allies from that which now awaited their arms. The Imperialists,

Battle of Fleurus.

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adhering to their system of attacking the enemy at all points, divided their forces into five columns, intending to assail at the same moment all parts of the Republican position; a mode of attack at all times hazardous, but especially so when an inferior is engaged with a superior force. The battle commenced on the 26th, at daybreak, and continued with great vigour throughout the whole day.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 138. Th. vi. 399, 400. Toul. iv. 328.

The first column, under the command of the Prince of Orange, attacked the left of the French under General Montaigu, and drove them back to the village of Fontaine Leveque; but the Republicans being there reinforced by fresh troops, succeeded in maintaining their ground, and repulsed the repeated charges of the Imperial cavalry. During a successful charge, however, the French horse were themselves assailed by the Austrian cuirassiers, and driven back in confusion upon the infantry, who gradually lost ground, and at length were compelled to fall back to the heights in front of Charleroi. The moment was critical, for the Austrians were on the point of carrying the village of Marchiennes-au-Pont, which would have intercepted the whole communications of the Republican army; but Jourdan, alarmed at the advance of the enemy in this quarter, moved up Kleber to support his left. That intrepid general hastily erected several batteries to meet the enemy's fire, and moved forward BERNADOTTE at the head of several battalions to the support of Montaigu. The Allies, under Latour and the Prince of Orange, being unsupported by the remainder of the army, and finding themselves vigorously assailed both in front and flank, fell back from their advanced position, and before four in the afternoon, all the ground gained in that quarter had been abandoned.[2]

[2] Jom. v. 143. Toul. iv. 329, 330. Th. vi. 399, 401.

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While these events were going forward on the left, the centre, where the village of Fleurus was occupied by sixteen thousand troops, and strongly strengthened by intrenchments, was the scene of an obstinate conflict. The attack in front of the Allies was successfully repulsed after passing the village, by the fire of artillery on the heights in the rear; but General Beaulieu, with the left wing of the Allies, having attacked and carried the post of Lambusart on the French right, the Republicans on the left were compelled to give way; and the important post of Fleurus, with its great redoubt, stood prominent in the midst of the Allied Forces, exposed to attack both in front and flank. The consequence of this was, that the great redoubt was on the point of being taken, and the French divisions in the centre were already in full retreat, when Jourdan hastened to the scene of danger with six battalions, who were formed in close columns, and checked the advance of the enemy. The French cavalry, under Dubois, made a furious charge upon the Imperial infantry, overthrew them, and captured fifty pieces of cannon: but being disordered by their rapid advance, they were immediately after attacked by the Austrian cuirassiers, who not only routed the victors, but retook the whole artillery, and drove them back in confusion upon their own lines.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 145, 146, 149. Toul. iv. 332. Th. vi. 401.

Meanwhile the Allied left, under Beaulieu, made the most brilliant progress. After various attacks, the village of Lambusart was carried, and the enemy's forces, for the most part, driven across the Sambre; but the vigorous fire of the French artillery prevented the Allies from debouching from the village, or obtaining complete success in that quarter. As it was, however, the situation of the Republicans was disadvantageous in every quarter. The right, under Mo-

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reau, was driven back, and in great part had recrossed the river; the left, under Montaigu, had abandoned the field of battle, and almost entirely gone over to the other bank; while the forces in the centre had been in part compelled to recede, and the great redoubt was in danger of being carried. Four divisions only, those of Lefebvre, Championnet, Kleber, and Daurier, were in a condition to make head against the enemy; when Cobourg, hearing of the fall of Charleroi, ordered a retreat at all points. Without detracting from the merit of Jourdan, it may safely be affirmed, that if the Prince of Orange, instead of drawing back his wing, when he found it too far advanced, had united with the centre to attack Fleurus, and the main body of the French army, while Beaulieu pressed them on the other side, the success would have been rendered complete, and a glorious victory achieved.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 150, 152. Th. vi. 401, 402. Toul. iv. 332.

Allies Retreat though not Defeated.

But nothing is so perilous as to evince any symptoms of vacillation after a general engagement. The battle of Fleurus was, in fact, a drawn battle; the loss on both sides was nearly equal, being between four thousand and five thousand men to each side; the French had given way on both wings, the centre with difficulty maintained its ground, and the Imperialists only retreated because the fall of Charleroi had removed the object for which they fought; and the secret instructions of their general precluded him from adopting any course, how brilliant and inviting soever, which promised to be attended with any hazard to the army: nevertheless, it was attended with the most disastrous consequences. The loss of Flanders immediately followed a contest which an enterprising general would have converted into a triumph.[2]

[2] Hard. iii. 23, 24. Jom. v. 152. Th. vi. 405, 406.

Cobourg retired to Nivelles, and soon after took post at Mount St John and Waterloo, at the entrance of

the Forest of Soignies, little dreaming of the glorious event which, under a firmer commander, and with the forces of a very differently united alliance, were there destined to counterbalance all the evils of which his indecision formed the commencement. Two days afterwards, the French issued from their intrenchments round Charleroi, and defeated the Allied rearguard at Mont Paliul, which fell back to Braine le Comte. Mons was shortly after evacuated, and the Allies, abandoning the whole fortresses which they had conquered, to their own resources, concentrated in front of Brussels. Several actions took place in the beginning of July, between the rearguard of the Allies and the French columns at Mont St John, Braine la Leude, and Sambre; but, at length, finding himself unable to maintain his position without concentrating his forces, Prince Cobourg abandoned Brussels, and fell back behind the Dyle.[1]

July 6 and 7.

[1] Jom. v. 152, 162. Toul. iv. 336.

It was not without the most strenuous exertions of the British Government to prevent them that these ruinous divisions broke out among the Allied Powers in Flanders. Immediately after the treaty of 19th April was signed, Lord Malmesbury, the English ambassador, set out from the Hague for Maestricht, where conferences were opened with the Prussian minister Haugwitz, and the Dutch plenipotentiaries. Their object was to induce the Prussian forces to leave the banks of the Rhine, and hasten to the scene of decisive operations in Flanders. These requisitions were so reasonable, and so strictly in unison with the letter as well as spirit of the recent treaty, that the Prussian minister could not avoid agreeing to them, and engaged to procure orders from the cabinet of Berlin to that effect. But Moellendorf, acting in obedience to secret orders from his court, declined to obey the

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requisition of the plenipotentiaries, and engaged in a fruitless and feigned expedition towards Kayserslautern and Sarre Louis, at the very time that he was well aware Jourdan, with forty thousand men, was hastening by forced marches to the decisive point on the banks of the Sambre.[1]

[1] Hard. ii. 545, 547.

When the danger became more threatening, and the Emperor himself had hastened to the neighbourhood of Charleroi to make head against the accumulating masses of the Republicans, the same requisitions were renewed in a still more pressing strain by the English and Dutch ministers. * But it was all in vain. The Prussian general betook himself to one subterfuge after another, alleging, that, by menacing Sarre Louis and Landau, he succoured the common cause more effectually, than if he brought his whole forces to the walls of Charleroi, and at length peremptorily refused to leave the banks of the Rhine. The ministers of the maritime powers upon this broke out into bitter complaints at the breach of faith on the part of the Prussian government, and reproached the marshal with a fact which they had recently discovered, that, instead of sixty-two thousand men stipulated by the treaty, and paid for by the Allies, only thirty-two thousand received daily rations at the army. Moellendorf denied the charge; recriminations ensued on both sides, and at length they separated mutually exasperated; and Lord Cornwallis declared he would suspend the payment of the British subsidy.[2]

[2] Hard. iii. 5, 6, 7.

After the departure of Cobourg from Tournay, the

* "It is not for nothing," said Lord Cornwallis, and Kinckel, the Dutch minister, "that we pay you our subsidies, nor in order that the subsidized power should employ the paid forces for their own purposes. If the Prussian troops do not act for the common cause, they depart from the chief object of the treaty."—Hard. iii. 65.

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Allies strove in vain to contend with the superiority of the Republicans in maritime Flanders. Tournay was evacuated, and while Pichegru himself marched upon Ghent to force back Clairfait, he detached Moreau with a considerable force to form the siege of the places bordering on the ocean. Nieuport capitulated, Fort Ecluse, the key of the Scheldt, was blockaded, and the island of Cadsand overrun by the Republicans, who crossed the arm of the sea which separated it from the mainland by swimming. Clairfait, although reinforced by six thousand English, who had marched from Ostend, under Lord Moira, found himself unable to make head against Pichegru; the old German tactics of carrying on war by a series of positions, which succeeded against the inconsiderable forces of Prussia, even when guided by the genius of Frederic, totally failed when opposed to the vehement ardour and inexhaustible numbers of the Revolutionary armies. After in vain attempting, in conjunction with Cobourg, to cover Brussels, he was compelled to fall back behind the Dyle; while the Duke of York also retired in the same direction, and encamped between Malines and Louvain.[1]

Pichegru drives back Clairfait in West Flanders.

July 7.

[1] Jom. v. 155, 162. Th. vi. 406. Toul. iv. 334, 335.

The retreat of the Allied Forces enabled the victorious armies of Pichegru and Jourdan to unite their forces at Brussels, where they met on the 10th July. And thus, by a series of energetic movements and glorious contests, were two armies, which a short time before had left the extremities of the vast line extending from Philipville to Dunkirk, enabled to unite their victorious forces for the occupation of the capital of Flanders.[2]

July 10. Pichegru and Jourdan advance to Brussels.

[2] Jom. v. 162.

The Austrian cabinet at this period entertained serious thoughts of peace. The opinion was very general on the continent, that the fearful energy and

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bloody proscriptions of Robespierre had considerably calmed the effervescence of the Revolution, and that his stern and relentless hand was alone adequate to restrain its excesses and restore any thing like a regular government at Paris. These ideas received a strong confirmation from the speech which he delivered on occasion of the fête of the Supreme Being; it was known that he had moderated many of the energetic plans of foreign invasion projected by Carnot, and that his brother had used his influence to preserve Piedmont and the north of Italy from an incursion, at a time when the Allies were little in a condition to have resisted it. The Imperial government was really desirous of an accommodation, in order to concentrate their armies and attention upon Poland, which was hourly approaching the crisis of its fate; and a large force had already entered Gallicia, where they professed their intention of coming as deliverers, and were received with open arms by the people of that province. Unable to bear, any more than Prussia, the weight of a double contest on the Rhine and the Vistula, and, deeming the latter more material to the interests of the monarchy than the former, they had definitively determined at Vienna on the abandonment of the Belgian provinces, and were now only desirous of extricating themselves from a contest in which neither honour nor profit was to be gained. A secret understanding in consequence took place between Cobourg and the French generals, the conditions of which were, that the Austrians should not be disquieted in their retreat to the Rhine, and the Republicans permitted, without molestation, to reduce the four great fortresses which they had wrested from the Republic in the preceding and present campaign. The fall of Robespierre prevented these overtures

from coming to any farther issue; but they early attracted the attention of the vigilant minister who directed the affairs of Great Britain, and he urged his ambassador to make the strongest remonstrances against a step so prejudicial to the interests of Europe. But the Austrians were resolute in their determination to abandon Flanders, alleging as a reason the inconstancy and disaffection of its inhabitants. "To behold a people so infatuated," said Count Metternich to Lord Cornwallis, "as, notwithstanding the most pressing exhortations to take up arms in defence of their religion, their independence and property, refuse to move, and voluntarily places their necks under the yoke, singing Ca Ira, was a phenomenon reserved for these days of desolation."[1]

[1] Hard. iii. 7, 33.

The English forces were now posted behind the Canal of Malines, and they amounted to above thirty thousand British and Hanoverians, and fifteen thousand Dutch. Their object was, by remaining on the defensive, to cover Antwerp and Holland, while the Austrians retired by Tirlemont upon Liege. In this way, while the Republicans remained with the centre at Brussels, and their wings extending from Wilworde to Namur, their adversaries retired by *diverging* lines towards the north and the south, and every successive day's march carried them farther from each other; a state of affairs, of all others the most calamitous, in presence of an enterprising enemy. The English were intent only on covering Antwerp and Holland; the Imperialists on drawing nearer to their resources at Cologne and Coblentz; neither recollected, that by separating their forces, they gave the enemy the means of crushing either, separately, at pleasure, and left him in possession of a salient position,[2] which would

English retire towards Holland.

[2] Jom. v. 162, 165. Toul. iv. 338.

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soon render both the provinces of the Lower Rhine and the United States untenable.

1794.

Inactivity of the French.

Contrary to all expectation, and in opposition to what might have been expected from the previous energy of their measures, the Committee of Public Safety arrested their army in the career of victory, and paralysed 150,000 men in possession of an internal line of communication, at the moment when their enemies were disunited, and incapable of rendering each other any assistance. This was the result of the secret understanding with Prince Cobourg, which has just been mentioned. On the 15th July, the Canal of Malines was forced after an inconsiderable resistance by the Dutch troops, and the Duke of York retired to Antwerp, which was soon after evacuated, and his whole forces concentrated towards Breda for the defence of Holland. On the other wing, Jourdan pursued his advantages against Cobourg; and after several inconsiderable engagements with the rearguard, Liege and Tongres were evacuated, and the Austrians retired behind the Meuse. But with these exceptions nothing was attempted by the Republicans for several weeks, while the Government waited the reduction of Valenciennes and the other places captured by the Allies on the frontier at the commencement of the war.[1]

1 Toul. iv. 338. Jom. v. 170, 172, 174.

Decree of the Convention to give no quarter.

To hasten their reduction, a bloody decree was passed by the Convention, ordaining their commanders to give no quarter to any garrison which should not surrender within twenty-four hours after the first summons. The humanity of the Republican generals refused to carry this atrocious decree into execution, and it was soon after rendered nugatory by the fall of Robespierre on the 28th July, (9th Thermidor.) The governor of Condé, when summoned to surrender in virtue of this atrocious decree, replied, "That one

nation had no right to decree the dishonour of another nation;" and the Committee of Public Safety, under Carnot's direction, feeling the iniquity of the measure, took advantage of fictitious delays to allow the garrisons to capitulate on the usual terms. General Scherer collected a body of troops from the interior and the neighbouring garrisons, and formed the siege successively of Landrecy, Quesnoy, Condé, and Valenciennes, all of which fell, after a trifling resistance, before the end of August.[1]

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[1] Toul. iv. 338. Jom. v. 172. Th. vi. 74.

At the same time a decree was passed by the Convention, prohibiting their armies from giving quarter to the English who might fall into their hands. "Republican soldiers," said Barrere, "you must, when victory shall put into your power either English or Hanoverians, strike without mercy; not one of them ought to return to the traitorous territory of England, or to be brought into France. Let the English slaves perish, but let Europe be free." To this decree the Duke of York replied, by an order of the day, ordering all French captives to be treated with the same humanity as before.* This generous conduct had the

May 30.

* He stated in that noble document, "The National Convention has just passed a decree that their soldiers shall give no quarter to the British or Hanoverian troops. His Royal Highness anticipates the indignation and horror which has naturally arisen in the minds of the brave troops whom he addresses upon receiving this information. He desires, however, to remind them, that mercy to the vanquished is the brightest gem in a soldier's character, and exhorts them not to suffer their resentment to lead them to any precipitate act of cruelty on their part which may sully the reputation they have acquired in the world. In all the wars which, from the earliest times, have existed between the English and French nations, they have been accustomed to consider each other in the light of generous as well as brave enemies; while the Hanoverians, the allies of the former, have shared for above a century in this mutual esteem. Humanity and kindness have at all times taken place, the instant that opposition ceased, and the same cloak has been frequently seen covering those who were wounded, friends and enemies, while indiscriminately conveyed to the hospitals of the conquerors. The British and Hanoverian armies will not believe that the French nation, even under their present infatuation, can

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desired effect; the humane efforts of the English commanders were seconded by the corresponding feelings of the French officers, and the prisoners on both sides were treated with the same humanity as before the issuing of the bloody decree.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1794, 145. History. Th. vii. 74.

Operations on the Rhine.

While the fortune of war, after a desperate struggle, was thus decisively inclining to the Republican side, on the northern, events of minor importance, but still upon the whole favourable to the French arms, occurred on the eastern and southern frontier. The dubious conduct, or rather evident defection of Prussia, paralysed all the operations on the Rhine. Sixty thousand Prussians and Saxons were assembled round Mayence, and along the Nahe; and the departure of Jourdan, with forty thousand, to reinforce the army on the Sambre, offered the fairest opportunity of resuming offensive operations with a preponderating force on the Moselle. Only two divisions at a distance from each other remained between Thionville and Kayserslautern; and though the government made the greatest exertions to reinforce them, the utmost that could be done was to raise the one to twenty, and the other to ten thousand men. Nor was the superiority less decisive on the Upper Rhine, where fifty thousand Imperialists formed the cordon from Bâle to Mayence; and seventy thousand more were prepared for active operations, while the force in the field, under General Michaud, to oppose them, was only thirty-six thousand, supported by fifty thousand, still retained in garrison, by the cautious policy of the

so far forget their character as soldiers, as to pay any attention to a decree as injurious to themselves as it is disgraceful to their government; and therefore his Royal Highness trusts that the soldiers of both nations will confine their sentiments of abhorrence to the National Convention alone, persuaded that they will be joined in them by every Frenchman who possesses one spark of honour, or one principle of a soldier."—Ann. Reg. 1794. State Papers, p. 169.

French government. Yet, with this immense superiority of force, the Allies did nothing. Instead of assembling, as they might easily have done, eighty thousand men, to attack the centre of the French lines on the Rhine, and relieve the pressure which operated so severely on the Sambre, they contented themselves with detaching a small force to dislodge the Republican post at Morlautern. A slight advantage was gained at Kayserslautern over the Republican division intrusted with the defence of the gorges; and General Michaud, unable to make head against such superior forces, retired to the intrenchments of the Queich, while the army of the Moselle resumed the positions it had occupied at the close of the preceding campaign. Shortly after Michaud received powerful reinforcements, and made vigorous preparations for resuming the offensive; while the British ambassador made vain attempts to stimulate the King of Prussia to execute the part assigned him in the treaty of the Hague. The whole attention of Prussia was fixed on Poland, and the movements of General Kosciusko; and nothing could induce its government to give any directions for the prosecution of the war on the Rhine, till after the fall of Charleroi, the battle of Fleurus, and the reinforcement of the Republican armies on the Rhine, had rendered it impossible to resume the offensive with any prospect of advantage.[1]

Inactivity of the Prussians.

23d May, 1794.

[1] Jom. v. 177, 189. St Cyr, ii. 232, 250.

In the south, the reduction of Lyons and Toulon, by rendering disposable the forces employed in the siege of these cities, gave an early and decisive superiority to the Republican arms. The levies ordered in September, 1793, had brought such an accession of strength to their forces, that in the middle of April the army of the Alps amounted to seventy-five thousand combatants. Piedmont, menaced with invasion

Operations in Piedmont.

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1794. by this formidable force, had only at its command a body of forty thousand men, spread over a chain of posts along the summit of the Alps, from Savona to Mont Blanc, and an auxiliary Austrian force, ten thousand strong, in the interior. The great superiority of the French forces would have enabled them to have instantly commenced the invasion of Italy; but pressed in other quarters, the Committee of Public Safety, under the directions of Robespierre, contented themselves with enjoining their commanders to drive the enemy over the Alps, and get possession of all the passes, leaving to a future year the long-wished for irruption into the Italian provinces.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 194, 198. Bot. i. 185, 193.

Mont Cenis is carried by the French.

The first operations of the Republicans were not successful. General Sarret, with a detachment of two thousand men, was repulsed at the Little St Bernard, while the column destined for the attack of the Mont Cenis was also unsuccessful. Far from being discouraged with these trifling reverses, General Dumas returned to the charge with more considerable forces, and on the 23d April, after a vigorous resistance, made himself master of the first pass, which was followed on the 14th May by the capture of the second. The loss of Mont Cenis cost the Sardinians six hundred prisoners, and twenty pieces of cannon. By these successes the whole ridge of the Alps, separating Piedmont from Savoy, fell into the possession of the Republican generals; and the keys of Italy were placed in the hands of the French government.[2]

March 24.

April 23.

May 14.

[2] Jom. v. 199, 201. Bott. i. 193—196.

Great successes of Napoleon and Massena in the Maritime Alps.

Nor were the operations of the Republicans less successful on the frontiers of Nice. The counsels of the leaders were there directed by General Bonaparte, whose extraordinary military abilities had already given him an ascendency far beyond his rank. His design was to turn Saorgio by its left, and cut off the

retreat of its garrison, by the great road from over the Col di Tende. The attacking force was divided into three columns. The first, twenty thousand strong, commanded by Massena, broke up on the 1st April, with twenty pieces of cannon, to pass between Saorgio and the sea; the second, composed of ten thousand men, under the immediate directions of Dumerbion, remained in front of the enemy, while the third, of equal force, was destined to gain the upper extremity of the valleys of the Vesubia, and communicate with the army of Savoy by Isola.[1]

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[1] Jom. v. 204.

In the course of his march, Massena traversed the neutral territory of Genoa, and after a hardy march as far as Garessio, found himself considerably in advance of the main body of the enemy, posted in intrenched camps on the western side of the mountains. Guided by the intrepid Col Rusca, an ardent chasseur, and well acquainted with these Alpine ridges, he boldly pursued his successes, and by a skilful combination of all his force, succeeded in storming the redoubts of the Col Ardente. In vain the Piedmontese received the assailants with a shower of stones and balls; nothing could withstand the impetuosity of the Republicans, and Massena pursuing his successes, reached Tanardo, and the heights which commanded the pass of the Briga. Rusca, familiar with the country, vehemently urged his commander to direct some battalions to descend to the Convent of St Dalmazia, seize the great road, destroy the bridges, and cut off the retreat of the great body of the enemy posted at the camp at Rauss; but this appeared too hazardous a measure to Massena, who preferred the certain advantage of compelling the evacuation of Saorgio, without risk, to the perilous attempt of compelling a force nearly equal to his own to surrender. Meanwhile, the attack of the

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centre, under Dumerbion, had been attended with equal success; and the Sardinian forces, pressed in front, and menaced in rear, evacuated the famous camp of Rauss, and fell back towards the Col di Tende. Dumerbion's leading columns approached the fort of Saorgio, at the same time that Massena's forces appeared on the heights immediately overhanging it behind; and this celebrated post, almost impregnable in front, but destitute of any defence against the forces of the Republicans, now perched on the rocks in its rear, surrendered at the first summons.[1]

April 28.

[1] Botta, i. 184, 190. Jom. v. 209, 210. Th. vi. 283.

The Sardinians are driven over the ridge of the Alps.

Meanwhile, the French left successfully ascended the Vesubia, and after a vehement resistance, the winding rocky road, between Figaretto and Lantosca was stormed, and the Allies driven back to the Col de Finisterre, while General Serrurier cleared the valley of the Tinea, and established a communication by Isola with the army of Savoy. To reap the fruit of so many successes, Dumerbion ordered Garnier to seize the Col de Finisterre, while his own centre drove the enemy from the Col di Tende. Both operations were successful; the Col de Finisterre fell after hardly any resistance; and although the Col di Tende was more bravely contested, the unexpected appearance of a division of French on their left spread a panic among the Piedmontese troops, which speedily led to the evacuation of the position. Thus, the Republicans, before the end of May, were masters of all the passes through the maritime Alps; and while, from the summit of Mont Cenis, they threatened a descent upon the valley of Susa, and the capital, from the Col di Tende, they could advance straight to the siege of the important fortress of Coni.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 211, 213. Bot. i. 186, 188, 190. Th. vi. 282.

Napoleon, whose prophetic eye already anticipated the triumphs of 1796, in vain urged the government

to unite the victorious armies in the valley of the Stura, and push on immediately with their combined strength to the conquest of Italy. The reverse at Kayserslautern induced them to withdraw ten thousand men from the army of the Alps to support the troops on the Rhine; and Dumerbion, satisfied with the laurels he had won, and with energies enfeebled by years, could not be induced to risk ulterior operations. After so brilliant a *debût*, the Republican forces failed even in reducing the little fort of Exiles, on the eastern descent of Mont Cenis; and for the three summer months, the victorious troops reposed from their fatigues on the heights which they had won above the clouds.[1]

[1] Bot. i. 187. Jom. v. 214.

War in the Eastern Pyrenees.

On the frontiers of Spain, the war assumed still more decisive features. The reduction of Toulon enabled the central government to detach General Dugommier with half the forces employed in its siege, to reinforce the army on the eastern Pyrenees; and it was resolved to act offensively at both extremities of that range of mountains. During the winter months incessant exertions were made to recruit the armies, which the immense levies of the Republic enabled the southern departments to do to such a degree, that at the opening of the campaign, notwithstanding their reverses, they were greatly superior in number to their opponents; while the Spanish government, destitute of energy, and exhausted by the exertions they had already made, were unable to maintain their forces at the former complement. Before the end of the year 1793, they were reduced to the necessity of issuing above L. 12,000,000 sterling of paper money, secured on the produce of the tobacco tax; but all their efforts to recruit their armies from the natives of the country having proved ineffectual, they were compelled to take

Great difficulties of the Spaniards.

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the foreigners employed at the siege of Toulon into their service, and augment the number of their mercenary troops. Every thing on the Republican side indicated the energy and resolution of a rising, every thing on the Spanish, the decrepitude and vacillation of a declining state. Between such powers, victory could not long remain doubtful.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 218, 221. Toul. iv. 304. Th. vi. 278, 279.

Dugommier, on his arrival at the end of December, found the army of the Eastern Pyrenees raised by his junction to thirty-five thousand men, encamped under the cannon of Perpignan; a large proportion of the troops were in hospital, and the remainder in a state of insubordination and dejection, which seemed to promise the most disastrous results. By entirely reorganizing the regiments, appointing new officers in the staff, and communicating to all the vigour of his own character, he succeeded in a few months not only in restoring its efficiency, but leading it to the most glorious successes. The Spanish army, recently so triumphant, had proportionally declined; above ten thousand men were in hospital, the expected reinforcements had not arrived, and the force in the field did not exceed twenty-five thousand effective troops. Before the end of February, the French force was augmented to sixty-five thousand men, of whom thirty-five thousand were in a condition immediately to commence operations.[2]

[2] Jom. v. 222, 223, 224, 225. Th. vi. 278. Toul. iv. 305.

On the 27th March, the Republicans broke up and drew near to the Spanish position. A redoubt on the Spanish left was taken a few days after the campaign opened, and General Dagobert was carried off by the malignant fever, which had already made such ravages in both armies. The Marquis Amarillas upon that drew back all his forces into the intrenched camp at Boulon. He was shortly after succeeded in the command by La Union, who immediately transferred the

headquarters to Ceret, a good position for an attacking, but defective for a defending army. They were there assailed on the 30th April by the whole French force; and one of the redoubts in the centre of the Spanish position having been stormed, the whole army fell back in confusion, which was increased into a total rout on the following day, by the Republican troops having made themselves masters of the road to Bellegarde, the principal line of their communication over the mountains into their own country. Finding themselves cut off from this route, the Spaniards were seized with one of those panics so common to their troops in the Peninsular war; the whole army fled in confusion over the hills, and could be rallied only under the cannon of Figueras, leaving one hundred and forty pieces of cannon, fifteen hundred prisoners, eight hundred mules, and all their baggage and ammunition to the victors, whose loss did not amount to one thousand men.[1]

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April 30.

May 1.

They are defeated in their Lines by the French.

[1] Toul. iv. 305, 307. Jom. v. 235. Th. vi. 279.

Dugommier immediately took advantage of his successes to undertake the siege of the fortresses of which the Spaniards had possessed themselves on the French territory. Collioure and Bellegarde were besieged at the same time; and although the inconsiderate ardour of the Republicans exposed them to a severe check at Port Vendre, the siege of Fort St Elmo was pressed with so much vigour, that the garrison, abandoned to its own resources, was compelled to evacuate the place, and retire to Collioure. Marshal Navarro, the Spanish commander, at the head of a garrison of seven thousand men, made a gallant defence; and the rocky nature of the ground exposed the besiegers to almost insurmountable difficulties;[2] but the perseverance of the French engineers having transported artillery to places deemed inaccessible, the commander, after hav-

Collioure taken.

[2] Toul. iv. 308. Jom. v. 241, 243.

May 26.

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ing made a vain attempt to escape by sea, which the tempestuous state of the weather rendered impracticable, laid down his arms, with his whole garrison.

Invasion of Spain by the Western Pyrenees.

At the other extremity of the Pyrenees, the French army, weakened by the detachment of considerable forces to Roussillon to repair the disasters of the preceding campaign, remained in the early part of the year on the defensive. The Republicans in that quarter did not amount to forty thousand men, of whom one-half were militia, totally unfit to take the field. An attack by the Spaniards on the French intrenchments early in February having been repulsed, nothing was undertaken of importance in that quarter till the beginning of June, when the government, encouraged by the great advantages gained in Roussillon, resolved to invade the Peninsula at once, at both extremities of the Pyrenees, while the improved organization of the new levies around Bayonne afforded every prospect of success.[1]

[1] Toul. iv. 309. Jom. v. 248, 251.

The invasion on the west took place by the valley of Bastan, the destined theatre of more memorable achievements between the armies of England and France. The Republicans were divided into three columns, which successively forced the Col di Maya and the valley of Roncesvalles. Some weeks afterwards, an attempt was made by the Spanish commander to regain the position which he had lost, but he was repulsed with the loss of eight hundred men, and soon after resigned the command of an army, which was daily increasing in disorder and demoralization. The Count Colomera, who succeeded to the command, was not more successful. He in vain endeavoured by proclamations to rouse the mountaineers of the Pyrenees to arms in their defence;[2] the

June 3.

June 23.

[2] Toul. iv. 310. Jom. v. 252, 255. and vi. 143.

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period was not arrived when the chord of religion was to vibrate through the Spanish heart.

1794.

Towards the end of July, the French drove the Spaniards out of the whole of the valley of Bastan, July 24. forced the heights of St Marcial, captured the intrenched camp and fortified posts on the Bidassoa, defended by two hundred pieces of cannon, and pushed on to Fontarabia, which surrendered on the first summons. Following up the career of success, they advanced to St Sebastian, and that important fortress, though garrisoned by seventeen hundred regular troops, capitulated without firing a shot. Colomera took post at Tolosa, to cover the roads leading to Pampeluna and Madrid; but at the first appearance of the enemy the whole infantry took to flight, and left the cavalry alone to sustain the brunt of the enemy, which, by a gallant charge, succeeded in arresting the advance of the pursuers. By these successes the French were firmly posted in the Spanish territory, and their wants amply supplied from the great magazines and stores, both of ammunition and provisions, which fell into their hands in the fortified places on the frontier. The English historian, who recounts the facility with which these successes were achieved by the inexperienced troops of France, cannot help feeling a conscious pride at the recollection of the very different actions of which that country was afterwards the theatre, and at marking in the scenes of Spanish disgrace the destined theatre of British glory.[1]

Great Successes of the Republicans.

August 4.

[1] Jom. v. 152.

While these events were occurring in Biscay, successes still more decisive were gained on the eastern frontier. Twenty thousand of the Republicans were employed in the blockade of Bellegarde, and the Catalonians, always ready to take up arms when their hearths are threatened, turned out in great numbers

Siege and Capture of Bellegarde.

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1794.

to reinforce the army of La Union. After three months of incessant efforts, the Spanish commander deemed his troops sufficiently reinstated to resume the offensive, and attempt the relief of Bellegarde, which was

Sept. 12.

now reduced to the last extremity. The principal attack was made against the right wing of Dugommier, and if it had been assailed with sufficient force, the success of the Spaniards could hardly have been doubtful; but the columns of attack having been imprudently divided, the convoy destined to revictual the fortress never reached its destination; and General AUGEREAU, who commanded the right wing, though driven back to the camp of La Madeleine, succeeded in baffling the objects of the enemy. The consequence was, that the Spaniards, after having at first gained some advantages, were compelled to retreat, and Bellegarde, seeing no prospect of relief, capitulated a few days afterwards. The Spanish general excused himself for the bad success of his arms, by alleging the insubordination and misconduct of the troops. "Without," said he, in his report to government, "consideration, without obeying their chiefs or their officers, who did their utmost to retain them, the soldiers took to flight, after having for the most part thrown away their arms." A battalion was ordered to be decimated for its cowardice, and La Union, despairing of success, solicited his dismissal.[1]

[1] Toul. v. 30, 33. Jom. vi. 118, 123. Th. vii. 92.

Discouraged by such repeated reverses, the Spanish government made proposals of peace; but the terms were deemed so inadmissible by the Committee of Public Safety, that they ordered Dugommier to give their answer from the cannons-mouth. In the meanwhile the Spanish commander had leisure to strengthen his position: Two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, in two lines, arranged along a succession of heights

nearly seven leagues in extent, presented a front of the most formidable kind, while a smaller intrenched camp in the rear, around Figueras, afforded a secure asylum in case of disaster. But the result proved how rare it is that a position of that description, how strong soever to appearance, is capable of arresting an enterprising and able assailant. The artillery, perched upon eminences, produced but an inconsiderable effect, with its plunging shot, on the masses in the valleys beneath, while the difficulty of communication between the different parts of the line rendered a disaster in any quarter extremely probable, from the superior forces which the enemy could bring to bear upon one point, and if it occurred, hardly reparable.[1]

[1] Toul. v. 34. Jom. vi. 124, 125.

Great Defeat of the Spaniards near Figueras.

On the night of the 16th November, the French attacking army, thirty thousand strong, was put in motion. It was divided into three columns. The right, under the command of Augereau, after an arduous march of eighteen hours over rocks and precipices, drove the Spaniards, under General Courten, from the camp of La Madeleine, and made themselves masters of the whole intrenchments in that quarter; but the left, under General Lauret, was repulsed by the heavy fire from the batteries to which he was opposed, and when Dugommier was preparing to support him, he was killed by a shell from the central redoubts of the enemy. This unlooked-for disaster for a time paralysed the movements of the Republican army; but Perignon having been invested with the command, moved a considerable force to the relief of Lauret, and with some difficulty extricated him from his perilous situation. But Augereau had vigorously followed up his successes. After giving his troops breath, he moved them to the centre, and forced the great redoubt,[2] though bravely defended by twelve hundred

[2] Toul. v. 34. Jom. vi. 140. Th. vii. 200.

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1794. men; the result of which was, that the Spaniards abandoned five other redoubts and almost all their artillery, and fell back to their intrenched camp in the neighbourhood of Figueras.

Perignon instantly prepared to follow up his successes. Wisely judging that the left was the weak
Nov. 19. point of the enemy's position, he reinforced Augereau in the night with two fresh brigades, and, on the
Nov. 20. morning of the 20th, moved all his forces to the attack. General Bon, intrusted with the conduct of the vanguard of the right wing, defiled over tracts hardly practicable for single passengers, and crossed the river Muga repeatedly, with the water up to the soldiers' middle. Arrived in presence of the redoubts, he ascended the mountain Escaulas, under a tremendous fire from the Spanish redoubts, and carried at the point of the bayonet the central intrenchment. La Union, hastening with the reserve to the redoubt of La Rosere, was killed on the spot; and that fort, regarded as impregnable, having been stormed, its whole defenders were put to the sword. These disasters discouraged the Spaniards along the whole line. Several other redoubts having been carried by the bayonet, the defenders evacuated the remainder, and blew them up. In a few minutes, twenty redoubts, constructed with infinite labour, were blown into the air; and the troops charged with their defence, flying in confusion to Figueras, overthrew a column of fresh troops advancing to their support, and rushed in utter confusion into
Nov. 24. the gates of the fortress. Such was the dismay of the Spaniards, that when the Republican outposts, a few days afterwards, approached Figueras, the garrison, consisting of above nine thousand men, amply provided with provisions and stores of every sort, laid down their arms; and the strongest place in Spain,[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 133, 138. Toul. v. 35, 36. Th. vii. 200.

amidst the general acclamation of the inhabitants, was delivered up to the invaders.

This unexpected conquest having made the French masters of the rich and fertile plain of Lampourdan, and of an ample supply of stores and artillery of every description, preparations were soon afterwards made for the siege of Rosas. The garrison consisted of nearly five thousand men, and the place in itself strong, as the glorious siege of 1809 demonstrated, was capable of being reinforced to any extent by sea. Nevertheless, such was the vigour of the Republicans, and the dejection of the Spaniards, that the assailants pushed the siege during the severest months of winter, without any molestation. The fort of Trinity was reduced on the 7th January; and the garrison, threatened with an immediate assault by a practicable breach, retired by sea in the beginning of February, leaving the fortress to the enemy.[1] Feb. 3, 1795. [1] Jom. vi. 141. Toul. iv. 36.

Nor was the fortune of war more favourable to the Spanish forces at the other extremity of the line. After the fall of St Sebastian, Colomera endeavoured without effect to rouse the population of the Pyrenean valleys, and the Republicans attempted to erect Biscay into a Republic, to be independent of the Spanish Crown. The usual fruits of democratic insurrection speedily appeared: The guillotine was erected at St Sebastian, and, in defiance of a solemn capitulation, the blood of the priests and the nobles was shed by the French commissioners, with as much inveteracy, as if Guipuzcoa had been La Vendée. Meanwhile disease made deeper ravages than the Spanish sword in the ranks of the invaders; in a short time above thirty thousand men perished in the hospitals. At length the Republican columns having been recruited by the never-failing levies in the interior, a general

Invasion of Biscay, and Defeat of the Spaniards.

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attack, late in autumn, was commenced on the Spanish positions. In the valley of Roncesvalles, their best division, after a vigorous resistance, was routed with the loss of forty pieces of cannon and fifteen hundred prisoners, and a severe tempest of wind and rain alone prevented its total destruction. This success enabled the invaders to seize and burn the founderies of Orbaizita and D'Enguy, which had so long served for the supply of the Spanish marine; after which they retired to the neighbourhood of St Sebastian and Fontarabia, still occupying in force the valley of Bastan.[1]

Oct. 16, 1794.

[1] Jom. vi. 154, 167. Th. vii. 199. 200. Toul. v. 218.

They sue for Peace.

These repeated disasters, and the evident disaffection of a considerable portion of their subjects, who were infected by the rage for democratical institutions, at length disposed the Spanish government to an accommodation. Nor were the Committee of Public Safety inclined to insist on rigorous conditions, as the liberation of two experienced and victorious armies promised to be of the utmost importance to the Republican armies, in the conquests which they meditated on the south of the Alps. With these dispositions on both sides, the work of negotiation was not difficult; and although the conclusion of the treaty was deferred to the succeeding year, no operations of importance were undertaken after this period. The severe winter of 1794–5, which gave the Republican troops the mastery of Holland, closed their operations on the snows of the Pyrenees.[2]

[2] Jom. vi. 168. Toul. v. 221.

The approach of winter, however, afforded no respite to the armies on the northern frontier. After a delay of two months, occasioned by the secret negociations which the fall of Robespierre had broken off, the Republican armies recommenced those active operations, which their immense superiority of phy-

sical force speedily rendered decisive. The Army of the North had seventy thousand effective men under its banners; that of the Sambre and Meuse, nominally 145,000 strong, presented an efficient force of 116,000 men; while the Duke of York, to cover the United Provinces, had hardly fifty thousand; and General Clairfait, who had replaced Prince Cobourg, could only muster 100,000 to maintain the footing of the Imperialists in the Flemish provinces. But, considered morally, the inequality between the contending armies was still greater: On the one side was the triumph of victory, the vigour of democratic ambition, the ardour of patriotic enthusiasm, the confidence of increasing numbers, and conscious ability; on the other, the dejection of defeat, the recrimination of commanders, the jealousies of nations, declining numbers, and an obstinate adherence to antiquated tactics.[1]

Renewal of Hostilities in Flanders.

[1] Jom. vi. 15, 26. Th. vii. 76.

All anxiety about their rear having been removed by the reduction of Condé, Valenciennes, Quesnoy; and Landrecy, the Republicans, in the end of August, resumed the offensive. The fort of Ecluse having surrendered to General Moreau, the Army of the North, reinforced by his division, commenced the invasion of Holland, while the States-General obstinately persisted in maintaining half their forces, amounting to twenty thousand men, in garrison in the interior, thirty leagues from the theatre of war, thereby leaving the protection of the frontier to the inconsiderable force of the British commander. With little more than half the invader's force, the Duke of York was charged with the defence of a frontier twenty leagues in extent.[2] He first took up a defensive position behind the Aa, but his advanced-posts having been defeated by the French with the loss of fifteen

Sept. 4, 1794.

British retire to right Bank of the Meuse.

Sept. 15.

[2] Jom. vi. 22, 25. Toul. v. 66, 67. Th. vii. 77, 78.

Sept. 18.

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hundred prisoners, he was compelled to retire to the right bank of the Meuse, leaving the important places of Bergen-op-Zoom, Breda, and Bois-le-duc, to their own resources.

Meanwhile, the army of the Sambre and Meuse, under Jourdan, made preparations for a general attack on the scattered forces of Clairfait. On the 18th, the Republicans, divided into six columns, broke up, and a number of partial actions took place along the whole line; but the posts of Ayvaile having been forced by the French, the Austrians fell back, with the loss of fifteen hundred men, and thirty-six pieces of cannon; and, after several ineffectual attempts to make a stand, finally evacuated their positions on the Meuse, and retired toward Rolduc and Aix la Chapelle. Jourdan immediately followed them; and while Kleber, with fifteen thousand men, formed the blockade of Maestricht, the General himself, with 100,000, pressed the discomfited forces of Clairfait, now hardly in a condition to keep the field, from the confusion and precipitance of their retreat. In vain the Austrians took up a strong defensive position behind the Roer: On the 2d of October, the Republican columns were in motion at break of day, to assail their position, and for the first time since the Revolution, the splendid spectacle was exhibited of 100,000 men moving to the attack, with the precision and regularity of a field day. The Austrians occupied a series of heights behind the river, from whence their numerous artillery kept up a destructive plunging fire upon the advancing columns of the French; but nothing could arrest the enthusiasm of the Republicans. The French grenadiers, with Bernadotte at their head, plunged into the stream, and forced the Austrians to abandon the opposite heights, while General Scherer, on the other wing,

Sept. 18.

Oct. 2.

Battle of Ruremonde, and Retreat of the Austrians.

also forced the passage of the river, and made himself master of Dueren. These disasters induced Clairfait, who still bravely maintained himself in the centre, to order a general retreat, which was effected before nightfall, with the loss of three thousand men; while that of the French did not amount to half the number.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 32, 36, 46. Toul. v. 69. Th. vii. 79, 84.

This battle decided the fate of Flanders, and threw back the Imperial army beyond the Rhine. The Austrians, in haste, crossed that river at Mulheim, and Jourdan entered Cologne the day following, and soon afterwards extended his troops to Bonn. Soon after the siege of Maestricht was seriously undertaken, and such was the activity of the Committee of Public Safety, that a splendid siege equipage, of two hundred pieces, descended the Meuse, and speedily spread desolation through the city. A large cavern, discovered in the rock on which the fort of St Petre was situated, gave rise to a subterraneous warfare, in which the French soldiers, ever ready to adapt themselves to circumstances, speedily distinguished themselves. At length, on November 4, the garrison, despairing of being relieved, capitulated, on condition of not serving against the French till regularly exchanged; and this noble fortress, with three hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, fell into the hands of the Republicans. After this event, and the capture of the castle of Rheinfels, by the army of the Moselle, which shortly after took place, there remained nothing of all their vast possessions on the left of the Rhine, but Luxembourg and Mayence, in the hands of the Imperialists.[2]

Oct. 5.

Oct. 20.

They cross the Rhine.

Nov. 4.

[2] Jom. vi. 42, 45. Toul. v. 79. Th. vii. 85.

Nor were the operations of the left wing, destined for the invasion of Holland, less successful. After the retreat of the Duke of York, Pichegru, whose forces amounted to seventy thousand efficient troops, formed

Active pursuit of the English by the Republicans.

CHAP. XVI.

1794. the siege of Bois le Duc, whose situation, situated at the confluence of three streams, was of importance as a base to their future operations. Both the States-General and the Duke of York had neglected to provide for the defence of this important fortress; its garrison was too weak either to man the works or

Sept. 29. undergo the fatigue of a siege; the fort of Crevecour surrendered almost at the first shot, and in a fort-

Oct. 10. night after the place capitulated, after a resistance disgraceful to the Dutch arms. After this success, the Duke of York distributed his troops along the line of the Waal, in hopes of being able to maintain a communication with the fortress of Grave, now threatened with a siege; but Pichegru, continuing his career of success, crossed the Meuse, and attacked the advanced posts of the Allies with so much vigour, that they were compelled to fall back, with considerable loss, across the Waal. After this check, the Duke of York stationed part of his troops in an intrenched camp, under the cannon of Nimeguen, and

British take a Position behind the Waal. the remainder in a line around Thiel, and between the Waal and the Leck, communicating with the Dutch corps at Gorcum, in the hope of being permitted to

Venloo taken. remain there undisturbed during the winter. Meanwhile, Pichegru invested Grave and Venloo; the latter of which, though defended by a sufficient garrison of eighteen hundred men, and amply provided with artillery and ammunition, surrendered before the works were injured, from the mere annoyance of the enemy's musketry.[1]

1 Toul. v. 68, 72, 77, 78. Jom. vi. 47. 56. Th. vii. 86.

The successive intelligence of the defection of the Prussians, and the open abandonment of the Low Countries by the Austrian forces, which exposed Holland and Hanover to the immediate invasion of the Republican forces, afforded the opposition in the English

Parliament a favourable opportunity for renewing their attacks on the Government; and they triumphantly observed, that after twenty-seven months of bloodshed and combats, the Allies were reduced to the same situation in which they were when Dumourier projected the invasion of Holland. But nothing could shake the firmness of Mr Pitt. "It matters little," said he, "whether the disasters which have arisen are to be ascribed to the weakness of the generals, the intrigues of camps, or the jealousies of the cabinets; the fact is, that they exist, and that we must anew commence the salvation of Europe." In pursuance of this heroic resolution, Sir Arthur Paget was despatched to Berlin to endeavour to obtain some light on the ambiguous and suspicious conduct of that power, and Lord Spencer to Vienna, to endeavour to divert the Imperial Cabinet from their alarming intention of abandoning the Low Countries.[1]

[1] Hard. iii. 41. Parl. Hist. xxxi. 1036.

As soon as Lord Spencer arrived at Vienna, he obtained a private audience of the Emperor, and laid before him the proposals of the English government, which were no less than the offer of an annual subsidy of three millions sterling, provided the Imperialists would renew the war in Flanders, and place the command of the army to the Archduke Charles, with Clairfait, Beaulieu, and Mack for his council. At the same time, they stated such facts respecting the measures of Cobourg as confirmed the suspicions which the cabinet of Vienna already entertained in regard to his conduct, and led to his recall from the army, of which Clairfait assumed the command.[2]

[2] Hard. iii. 69—73.

The cabinet of Vienna, however, secretly inclined to peace, delayed giving any definitive answer to the proposals of Mr Pitt, and meanwhile entertained secret overtures from the French government, while

CHAP. XVI. 1794. Clairfait received orders to remain altogether on the right bank of the Rhine, and Alvinzi was merely detached with twenty-five thousand men to co-operate with the Duke of York in the defence of Holland. This retreat renewed the alarms of Prussia for her possessions on the Rhine, which was much increased by the cessation about the same period of the subsidies from the English government, who most justly declined to continue their monthly payments to a power which was doing nothing to the common cause. Frederick William upon this withdrew twenty thousand of his best troops from the army of the Rhine, to join the forces which the Empress Catherine was moving towards Warsaw under the far-famed Suwarrow. The French immediately made themselves masters of the whole left bank of the Rhine; the castle of Rheinfels fell into their hands, and there remained nothing to the Allies of their great possessions on that side of the stream, but the fortresses of Luxembourg and Mayence. It was now evident that the coalition was rapidly approaching its dissolution; the King of Prussia openly received overtures for peace from the French government, while the Duke of Wurtemberg, the Elector of Saxony, the Elector of Mayence, and other lesser potentates, secretly made advances to the same effect, and insisted so strongly on the danger of their situation, that the Emperor, notwithstanding all the firmness of Thugut, was obliged to acquiesce in their pacific measures. The 5th of December was the day fixed for the discussion of the important question of peace or war in the diet of the empire. And such was the consternation generally diffused by the divisions of the Allies, and successes of the French, that fifty-seven voices then declared for peace, and thirty-six demanded the King of Prussia for a mediator. This import-

Dec. 5.

and resolution at once determined the conduct of Prussia: She now threw off the mask, and established conferences at Bale preparatory to a peace; while England made unheard-of efforts to retain Austria in the confederacy, and at length, by the offer of a subsidy of L. 6,000,000, prevailed on that power to maintain her armies on the defensive on the banks of the Rhine, and resume, in the ensuing campaign, a vigorous offensive in Italy.[1]

[1] Hard. iii. 81, 95, 110.

The successes which have been detailed, great as they were, were but the prelude, on the part of the French, to a winter campaign, attended with still more decisive results. Towards the end of October, Pichegru undertook the siege of Nimeguen; the Duke of York approached with thirty thousand men, and, by a vigorous sally upon the besiegers, who had the temerity to open their trenches, though the place was only invested on the left bank of the Waal, gained an ephemeral success, attended by no important consequences. Shortly after, the French established some batteries, destined to command the bridge which connected the town with the intrenched camp in its rear, and soon sunk some of the pontoons composing it, which so much disconcerted the Allied commanders, that they hastily evacuated the place, with the bulk of the garrison, in the night, leaving its defence to an inadequate garrison of three thousand men. These troops, discouraged by the flight of their fellow-soldiers, overawed by the redoubled fire of the besiegers, and despairing of maintaining the place, immediately attempted to follow their example. Terror seized their ranks; they precipitated themselves upon the bridge, which was burnt before the rearguard had passed over; one regiment was obliged to capitulate, and part of another, embarked on a flying bridge, was stranded on the left bank,[2] and next day made prison-

Oct. 27. Siege of Nimeguen.

Which is taken.

Nov. 4.

[2] Jom. vi. 174, 179. Th. vii. 176, 177. Toul. v. 76.

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1794.

ers by the French; and this splendid fortress, which rendered them masters of the passage of the Waal, fell into the hands of the Republicans.

Misunderstanding between the Dutch and English.

The Dutch loudly reproached the English with the abandonment of this important point, but apparently without reason; for how was it to be expected that the Duke of York, with thirty thousand men, was to maintain himself, in presence of seventy thousand French, with the Rhine in his rear, when three times that force of Austrians had deemed themselves insecure, till they had that river, an hundred miles farther up, thrown between them and the enemy? Be that as it may, the evacuation of Nimeguen completed the misunderstanding between the Allied Powers, and by spreading the belief in Holland that their cause was hopeless, and that their Allies were about to abandon them, eminently contributed to the easy conquest of the United Provinces, which so soon after followed.

Dec. 24. Grave, six weeks after, capitulated, after an honourable resistance; and Breda, one of the last of the Dutch barrier towns, was invested.[1]

[1] Toul. v. 77. Jom. vi. 175.

The French army, worn out with seven months of incessant marching and bivouacs, now stood excessively in need of repose. The clothing of the soldiers was in rags, their shoes were worn out, and the equipments of the artillery, but for the supplies received from the captured places, would long ago have been exhausted. But all the representations of the Generals upon these points were overruled; and the Committee of Public Safety, inflamed by the spirit of conquest, and guided by the enterprise of Carnot, resolved upon exacting from them fresh sacrifices. Accustomed to find every difficulty yield to the devotion of the Republican soldiers, they resolved, after a month's rest to the soldiers,[2] to prosecute their successes in the

[2] Jom. vi. 179, 180. Th. vii. 178.

midst of a rigorous winter, and to render the severity of the season the means of overcoming the natural defences of the Dutch provinces.

The first object was to cross the Waal, and, after driving the Allied Forces over all the mouths of the Rhine, penetrate into Holland by the Isle of Bommel. For this purpose, boats had for some time past been collected at Fort Crevecour, and pontoons and other materials, for a bridge, at Bois le Duc; and the preparations having been completed, the passage was commenced, at daybreak, on the 12th November. But the firm countenance of the Allies defeated all their attempts; and, after several ineffectual efforts, Moreau, whose sagacity clearly perceived the danger of persisting in the design, withdrew his troops, and the army was put into winter quarters, between the Meuse and the Rhine.[1]

Nov. 12, 1794.

[1] Jom. vi. 182. Toul. v. 166. Th. vii. 181.

Early in December, the Duke of York, supposing the campaign finished, set out for England, leaving to General Walmoden the perilous task of protecting, with an inferior and defeated army, a divided country, against a numerous and enterprising enemy. But a severe frost, which soon after set in, and rendered that winter long memorable in physical annals, made the Republicans conceive the design of invading Holland, while the frost rendered the numerous canals and rivers, which intersected the country, passable for troops and artillery. The prospect of that danger excited the utmost alarm in the mind of General Walmoden, who, seeing the Meuse frozen in his front, while the Rhine and the Waal were charged with floating ice in his rear, was justly afraid that the same cold which exposed his line to the attacks of the enemy, would render the passage of the arms of the sea impracticable, in the event of retreat. Influenced by

Winter Campaign of Pichegru.

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these apprehensions, he passed his heavy cavalry to the other side of the Waal, evacuated his magazines and hospitals upon Dwenter, and ordered the Prince of Hesse d'Armstadt, cantoned with the most advanced corps in the Isle of Bommel, to abandon it, on the first intelligence of the passage of the Meuse by the enemy.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 183, 184. Toul. v. 167. Th. vii. 182, 183.

Dec. 28, 1794.

At the end of December, the Meuse being entirely frozen over, and the cold as low as 17° of Reaumur, the French army commenced its winter campaign by an attack on two columns of the Dutch advanced posts. The result was what might have been expected from an irruption into a cordon of posts by concentrated forces; the Dutch troops, after a slight resistance, fled in confusion, some to Utrecht, and others to Gorcum, leaving sixty pieces of cannon, and sixteen hundred prisoners, in the hands of the invaders. In the general confusion the Republicans even made themselves masters of some forts on the Waal, and crossed that river; but the stream being not yet passable for heavy artillery, Pichegru withdrew his troops to the left bank. But meanwhile the right of the Dutch position was assailed by the French, one brigade driven into Williamstadt, another made prisoners, and Breda invested. On the following day Grave capitulated, after an honourable resistance of two months, and a bombardment of three weeks, from famine; a noble example, the more worthy of admiration, from its having occurred in the middle of the general consternation, and after numerous instances of shameful dereliction of duty on the part of the Dutch troops.[2]

He makes a general Attack on the Allied Position.

Dec. 29.

[2] Jom. vi. 186, 188. Toul. v. 170. Th. vii. 186—190.

So many disasters produced their usual effect in sowing the seeds of dissension among the allied Generals. Walmoden was desirous to concentrate his forces on the Waal between Nemiguen and St André,

to make head against the French, who were making preparations to cross that river; but the Prince of Orange insisted on the Allied Forces approaching Gorcum, in order to cover the direct road to Amsterdam, where the Republican agents had been long preparing a revolutionary movement, and an explosion was daily expected. Thus thwarted in the only rational mode of carrying on the campaign, Walmoden resolved to abandon the United Provinces to their fate, and with a view to secure his retreat to Hanover, concentrated the English forces behind the Linge, and covered them on the left by the Austrian contingents. Orders were at the same time given to abandon the line of the Waal as soon as the enemy should present themselves in force for the passage of that river. But an unexpected panic having occurred in the division intrusted with the park of artillery near Thiel, it became evident that this position, in the dejected state of the army, was not tenable, and the troops, with the exception of a small vanguard, were withdrawn behind the Rhine.[1]

Walmoden retires towards Hanover.

[1] Jom. vi. 189, 191. Th. vii. 191.

Despairing of their situation after the departure of the English army, the States-General made proposals of peace to the French government, offering, as an inducement, to recognize the Republic, and pay down two hundred millions of francs. The proposals were in the highest degree desirable, as the success of the invasion depended entirely on the continuance of the frost, and an accommodation with Holland would disengage fifty thousand men for operations on the Rhine; but the Committee of Public Safety, carried away by success, and desirous at all hazards of establishing a revolutionary government in Holland, haughtily rejected them, and ordered Pichegru instantly to invade that devoted country.[2]

Dutch sue for Peace in vain.

[2] Jom. vi. 192, 193.

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1794. Jan. 8, 1795. The continuance of the frost, which had now set in with more severity than had been known for a hundred years, gave an unlooked-for success to this ambitious determination. On the 8th January the French army crossed the Waal, now almost completely frozen, at various points, which was facilitated by the capture of Thiel by General Moreau. A battle now could alone save the Dutch Republic; but the dejected state of the army, suffering under the extremity of cold and hardship, with the thermometer at 17° of Reaumur, rendered this a hopeless alternative. Walmoden, therefore, abandoned Holland altogether, and retiring to the line of the Issel from Arnheim to Zutphen, left the United Provinces to their fate.[1]

French cross the Waal.

1 Th. vii. 191. Toul. v. 171. Jom. vi. 196.

Stadtholder embarks for England.

The situation of the Stadtholder was now in the highest degree embarrassing. Abandoned by the army of General Walmoden, unable with his single forces to make head against the torrent of the Republican forces, distracted by the divisions in all the great towns in his rear, and daily expecting a revolution at Amsterdam, the Prince of Orange resolved to abandon the Republic altogether, and embark for England. With this view he presented himself before the States-General, and after declaring that he had done his utmost to save the country, but without success, avowed his resolution of retiring from his command, and recommended to them to make a separate peace with the enemy. On the following day he embarked at Schevennigen, and the States immediately issued an order to their soldiers to cease all resistance to the invaders, and despatched ambassadors to the headquarters of Pichegru to propose terms of peace.[2]

2 Th. vii. 191. Jom. vi. 199.

Meanwhile the French generals, desirous to avoid the appearance of subjugating the Dutch, were pausing in their career of success, in expectation of revo-

lutionary movements manifesting themselves in the principal towns. General Daendels wrote to the leaders of the insurrection: "The representatives of France are desirous that the Dutch people should enfranchise themselves; they will not subdue them as conquerors; they are only waiting till the inhabitants of Haarlem, Leyden, and Amsterdam, rise in a body, and unite themselves to their brethren who have taken the lead at Bois le Duc." The receipt of this offer raised to the utmost height the public effervescence at Amsterdam. The popular party of 1787 assembled in great numbers, and besieged the Burgomasters in the town-hall; the advanced guard of the French army was already at the gates; terror seized the bravest hearts; the magistrates resigned their authority; the democratic leaders were installed in their stead; the tricolor flag hoisted on the Hotel de Ville; and the Republican troops, amidst the shouts of the multitude, entered the city.[1]

Revolution at Amsterdam.

Jan. 18, 1795.

Which admits the French Troops.

[1] Jom. vi. 200. Toul. v. 175. Th. vii. 192.

The conquest of this rich and powerful city, which had defied the whole power of Louis XIV., and imposed such severe conditions on France at the treaties of Utrecht and Aix-la-Chapelle, was of immense importance to the French government. Utrecht, Leyden, Haarlem, and all the other towns of the Republic, underwent a similar revolution, and everywhere received the French soldiers as deliverers; the power of the Convention soon extended from the Pyrenees to the northern extremity of Friesland. The immense naval resources, the vast wealth which ages of independence had accumulated in the United Provinces, lay at the mercy of the Convention. This great Revolution, to the honour of the democratic party be it recorded, was accomplished without bloodshed or any of the savage cruelty which had stained the first efforts of a free spirit in France; a signal example of

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the influence of free institutions in softening the asperity of civil dissension, calculated to alleviate many of the gloomy anticipations which the annals of the French Revolution might otherwise produce.

Dutch Fleet captured by the French Cavalry.

These successes were soon followed by others, if possible, still more marvellous. On the same day on which General Daendels had entered Amsterdam, the left wings of the army, after passing the lake of Biesbos on the ice, made themselves masters of the great arsenal of Dordrecht, containing six hundred pieces of cannon, ten thousand muskets, and immense stores of ammunition. The same division immediately after passed through Rotterdam, and took possession of the Hague, where the States-General were assembled. To complete the wonders of the campaign, a body of cavalry and flying artillery crossed the Zuyder Zee on the ice, and summoned the fleet, lying frozen up at the Texel; and the commanders, confounded at the hardihood of the enterprise, surrendered their ships to this novel species of assailants. At the same time the province of Zealand capitulated to the French troops; and the right wing of the army continuing its successes, compelled the English to abandon the line of the Issel; Friesland and Groningen were successively evacuated, and the whole United Provinces overrun by the Republican arms. The English Government, finding their services useless on the continent, dismissed the Hanoverians to their native country, and the British, embarked on board their ships, speedily carried the terror of their arms to the remotest colonies of the Indian seas.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 208, 212. Th. vii. 194, 195.

The discipline of the French soldiers during this campaign, contributed as much as their valour to these astonishing successes. Peaceable citizens, converted into soldiers by the decree of September 1793, were rapidly converted into disciplined soldiers; after eight

months of marches and combats, they undertook, without murmuring, a winter campaign; destitute of almost every thing, from the extreme depression of the paper money,* in which they received their pay, they crossed numerous streams in the depth of a rigorous winter, and penetrated, after a month's bivouacking, to Amsterdam, without having committed the slightest disorder. The inhabitants of that wealthy capital, justly apprehensive of pillage from the entrance of so necessitous a body, were astonished to see ten regiments of soldiers, half-naked, defile through their streets to the sound of military music, pile their arms in the midst of ice and snow, and calmly wait, as in their own metropolis, the quarters and barracks assigned for their lodging.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 215. Th. vii. 193.

Violent Measure of Spoliation adopted by the French.

It was such splendid conduct as this which spread so generally, and perpetuated so long, the general illusion in favour of Republican institutions; but the Dutch were not long in being awakened to sad realities from their deceitful dream: Forty of their ships of war had been withdrawn with the Prince of Orange, and were lodged in the British ports; the remaining fifty were immediately taken possession of by the Republicans for the service of the French. The credit of the famous Bank of Amsterdam was violently shaken, and owed its withstanding the shock to the intervention of government; forced requisitions, to an immense amount, of clothing, stores, and provisions, gave them a foretaste of the sweets of military dominion; while a compulsory regulation, which compelled the shopkeepers to accept of the depreciated French assignats at the

* The soldiers being still paid in assignats, which passed only for one-fifteenth of their real value, the pay of an officer was only equal in real value to three francs, or half-a-crown a-month. In 1795, one-third was paid in specie, which raised the income of a captain to seventy francs, or three pounds Sterling a-month.—Jom. vi. 214.

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rate of nine sous for a franc, restored the army to abundance, by throwing the loss arising from the depreciation, upon the inhabitants of the enfranchised capital.[1]

[1] Th. vii. 199.

To complete the picture of this memorable campaign, it is only necessary to recount the concluding operations on the Upper Rhine and the Alps.

The check at Kayserlautern having induced the French government to reinforce their troops on the German frontier, ten thousand men were withdrawn from Savoy, and fifteen thousand from La Vendée, to augment the armies on the Rhine. By the middle of June the armies on the Rhine amounted to 114,000 men, of whom fifty thousand were on the Lower part of the river, forty thousand on the Upper, and twenty-four thousand in the Vosges mountains. The Committee of Public Safety incessantly impressed upon General Michaud, who commanded them, the necessity of taking the initiative, by renewing his attacks without intermission, and of acting in large masses; but that General, not sufficiently aware of the new species of warfare which the Republicans had commenced, adhered to the old system of a parallel attack along the whole line. The action took place on the 2d July, and led to no decisive result. The enemy were touched at all points, but vigorously pushed at none; and one thousand men lost to the Republicans without any advantage. Upon receiving intelligence of this check, Carnot renewed his orders to concentrate his forces, and act by columns on particular points. A fortnight after the attack was renewed, and, by a concentrated effort against the centre of the Allied position, their whole army was compelled to retire.[2] The Republicans advanced in pursuit as far as Frankenthal, and resumed the line of the Rehbach, abandon-

Concluding Operations on the Rhine.

July 2.

[2] Jom. vi. 59, 75, 77. Th. vii. 88, 89.

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at the commencement of the campaign. In this affair the Allies lost three thousand men, and the spirit of victory was transferred to the other side.

Both parties remained in a state of inactivity after this contest, until the beginning of August, when the Army of the Moselle, being reinforced by fifteen thousand choice troops from La Vendée, and raised to forty thousand men, made a forward movement and occupied Treves. But while this was going forward, the Prussian army, instructed by their recent disaster, and observing the dispersed position of the French army in the valley of the Rhine, made a sudden attack with twenty-five thousand men upon the division of General Meynier at Kayserlautern, totally defeated them, and drove them back with the loss of four thousand men. Had this success been vigorously supported, it might have led to the most important results, and totally changed the fate of the campaign; but not being followed up by the bulk of the Allied Force, which still preserved its extended position, it produced only a temporary consternation in the French armies. In effect, such was the inactivity of the Allied Generals, and their obstinate adherence to the system of position, that they allowed the Army of the Moselle, not forty thousand strong, to remain undisturbed in Treves for two months, though flanked on one side by sixty-five thousand Prussians and Austrians, who occupied the Palatinate; and, on the other, by eighty thousand Imperialists, who were encamped in the neighbourhood of Luxembourg.[1]

Aug. 9. Army of the Moselle occupies Treves.

Aug. 19.

[1] Jom. vi. 78, 87. Th. vii. 89.

At length, in the beginning of October, the Committee of Public Safety directed the armies of the Moselle and the Rhine to unite and expel the Allies from the Palatinate. Their junction having been effected, and the retreat of Clairfait beyond the Rhine exposed

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their right flank to be turned, the Prussians fell back to Mayence, and crossed to the right bank by its bridge of boats. That important fortress was soon after invested; Rheinfels, contrary to the most express orders, evacuated; and the old Marshal Bender shut up in the grest fortress of Luxembourg, with ten thousand men. The rigours of the season, and the contagious diseases incident to the great accumulation of young soldiers, soon filled the hospitals, and the Republican armies were more severely weakened by the mortality of their winter rest, than they had been by the losses of a summer campaign.[1]

Allies driven over the Rhine, and Mayence invested.

[1] Jom. vi. 86–91. Th. vii. 89.

In Savoy, the great detachments made in June to reinforce the Army of the Rhine, reduced the French armies to the defensive; and they confined their efforts to maintain themselves till the falling of the snows on the summits of the Alps, from the neighbourhood of Gex to the valley of the Stura. The plan of Buonaparte for the invasion of Piedmont by the valley of the Stura, was not adopted by the Committee of Public Safety, and the breathing-time thus afforded them enabled the court of Turin to recover from their consternation. Not disconcerted with this, he presented a second plan to the government, the object of which was to move forward the Army of Italy to Demonte, and, after reducing that place, advance to the valley of Coni, while sixteen thousand men, from the Army of the Alps, covered their operations; the result of which would have been, that fifty thousand men would have taken up their winter-quarters on the southern side of the Alps. The fall of Robespierre prevented the execution of this plan, and postponed for two years the glories of the Italian campaign. Reduced, by the orders of the new government, to defensive measures, the Army of the Alps yet gain-

Conclusion of the Campaign in Savoy.

ed a brilliant advantage, by defeating a corps of ten thousand Austrians and Piedmontese, who had advanced, in concert with the English fleet, against Savona, in order to cut off the communication between the Republicans and the State of Genoa, from which their principal resources were derived. After this success both parties retired into their winter-quarters, and the snows of that rigorous season there, as elsewhere, gave repose to the contending armies.[1]

[1] Th. vii. 90, 91. Jom. vi. 97, 110, 114.

Renewal of the War in La Vendée.

The contest in La Vendée, which a little humanity on the part of the government would have completely terminated after the victories of Savenay and Mans, was rekindled during this year by the severities exercised towards the vanquished. The state of La Vendée at this period is thus painted by an eye-witness attached to the Republican armies.—"I did not see a single male being at the towns of Saint Amand, Chantonnay, or Herbiers. A few women alone had escaped the Republican sword. Country-seats, once so numerous in that country, farm-houses, cottages, in fine, habitations of every sort, had been reduced to ashes. The herds and flocks were wandering in terror around their usual places of shelter, now smoking in ruins, and lowing in vain for the hands which were wont to feed them. At night, the flickering and dismal blaze of conflagration afforded light over the whole country. The bleating of the disturbed flocks, and the bellowing of the terrified cattle, was drowned in the hoarse notes of the ravens, and the howling of the wolves and other wild animals, who had been attracted from afar to the scene of slaughter. As I journeyed in the night, guided by the uncertain light of the flames, a distant column of fire, widening and increasing as I approached, served as a beacon. It was the town of Mortagne in flames.[2] When I arrived there, no living creatures

[2] Mem. d'un Ancien Administrateur des Armies Republicans, p. 97.

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were to be seen except a few wretched women, who were striving to save some remnants of their property during the general conflagration."

These appalling cruelties were universal, and produced the usual effect of such excessive and uncalled-for severity. The infernal columns of Thurreau, the Noyades of Carrier, drove the Vendéans to desperation. "Nulla spes victis si non desperare salutem," became the principle of a new war, if possible more murderous and disastrous than the former; but it was conducted on a different principle. Broken and dispersed by the Republican forces, pierced in every direction by the infernal columns, the Vendéans were unable to collect any considerable body of forces; but from amidst their woods and fastnesses, they maintained in detached parties an undaunted resistance. Stofflet and Charette continued, after the death of the other chiefs, to direct their efforts, but their mutual jealousy prevented any operations of considerable importance, and led them to sacrifice to their ambition the gallant M. De Marigny, one of the most intrepid and constant of the Royalist leaders.[1]

[1] Jom. v. 278. Lac. xii. 295.

Storming of Thurreau's Intrenched Camps.

In the spring of 1794, General Thurreau established sixteen intrenched camps round the insurgent district; but the detachment of twenty-five thousand men from La Vendée to the Pyrenees and the Moselle, having compelled him to remain on the defensive, the Royalists took advantage of the respite thus afforded to reorganize their forces. Forty thousand men, including two thousand horse, were soon under arms in this unconquerable district, with which Charette stormed three of the intrenched camps, and put their garrisons to the sword.[2]

[2] Lac. xii. 297. Jom. vi. 284.

Meanwhile the severities of the Republicans, in persecuting the peasants of Brittany, who sheltered the

fugitive Vendéans, kindled a new and terrible warfare in that extensive province, which, under the name of the Chouan War, long consumed the vitals, and paralysed the forces of the Republic. The nobles of that district, Puisaye, Bourmont, George Cadouhal, and others, commenced a guerilla warfare with murderous effect, and soon on a space of twelve hundred square leagues, thirty thousand men were in arms in detached parties of two or three thousand each.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 243–246.

Brittany, intersected by wooded ridges, abounding with hardy smugglers, ardently devoted to the Royalist cause, and containing a population of 2,500,000 souls, afforded far greater resources for the Royalist cause than the desolated La Vendée, which never contained a third of that number of inhabitants. Puisaye was the soul of the insurrection. Proscribed by the Convention, with a price set upon his head; wandering from chateau to chateau, from cottage to cottage, he became acquainted with the spirit of the Britons, their inextinguishable hatred of the Convention, and conceived the bold design of hoisting the Royal standard again amidst its secluded fastnesses. His indefatigable activity, energetic character, and commanding eloquence, eminently qualified this intrepid chief to become the leader of a party, and soon brought all the other Briton nobles to range themselves under his standard. Early in 1794, he opened a communication with the English government, and strongly urged the immediate landing of an expedition of ten thousand men, with arms and ammunition, with which he answered for the re-establishment of the Royalist cause. So formidable did this war soon become, that, according to an official report of Carnot before the end of the year, there were no less than 120,000 Republicans on the shores of the ocean, of whom above eighty

Rise of the Chouan War.

Its vast extent.

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thousand were in active warfare. Even in Normandy, the seeds of revolt were beginning to manifest themselves; and detached parties showed themselves between the Loire and the Seine, which struck terror into Paris itself. "On considering this state of affairs," says Jomini, "it is evident that there existed over all the west of France, powerful elements of resistance, and that if they had been united under one head, and seconded by the Allied Powers, it was by no means impossible to have restored the Royalist cause." Had the Duke D'Enghien, with a few thousand men, landed in Brittany, and established a council, directing alike Puisaye, Bernier, Stofflet, Sapinaud, Scapeaux, and others, so as to combine their energies for one common object, instead of acting as they did without any concert in detached quarters, it is impossible to calculate what the result might have been. It is painful to think what at that crisis might have been effected, had fifteen thousand troops from England formed the nucleus of an army, made the Royalists masters of some of the fortified seaport towns with which the coast abounded, and lent to the insurgents the aid of her fleet, and the terrors of her name.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 234, 252.

Immense results of the Campaign.

Such was the memorable campaign of 1794; one of the most glorious in the annals of France; not the least memorable in the history of the world. Beginning on every side, under disastrous or critical circumstances, it terminated with universal glory. The Allies, at its commencement, were besieging, and soon captured the last of the Flemish frontier towns; the forces on the Rhine were unable to make head against their adversaries; the Alps were still in the possession of the Sardinian troops, and severe disasters had checkered the campaign at both extremities of the Pyrenees. At its conclusion, the Spaniards, defeated

both in Biscay and Catalonia, were suing for peace; the Piedmontese, driven over the summit of the Alps, were trembling for their Italian possessions; the Allied Forces had everywhere recrossed the Rhine; Flanders was subdued, La Vendée vanquished, Holland revolutionized, and the English banners had fled for refuge into the states of Hanover. From a state of depression, greater than the darkest era of Louis XIV., France had passed at once to triumphs greater than had graced the proudest period of his reign.

The prodigious Forces of the Republic.

But these immense successes had not been gained without proportionate losses, and it was already evident that the enormous sacrifices by which they had been achieved, could not be continued for any length of time without inducing national ruin. During the course of the campaign the Republic had strained every nerve; 1,700,000 men had at one time combated by sea and land under its banners; and at its close, 1,100,000 were still numbered in the rolls of the army. But of this great force, only 600,000 were actually under arms; the remainder encumbered the hospitals, or were scattered in a sickly or dying state in the villages on the line of the army's march. The disorder in the Commissariat, and departments intrusted with the clothing and equipment of the troops, had risen to the highest pitch; hardly any exertions could have provided for the wants of such a multitude of armed men, and the cupidity or selfishness of the revolutionary agents had diverted great part of the funds destined for these objects, into the accumulation of their private fortunes. It augments our admiration for the soldiers of the Republic, when we recollect that their triumphs were generally achieved without magazines, tents, or equipments of any kind; that the armies, destitute of every thing,[1] bivouacked

[1] Jom. vi. 214, 215. Toul. v. 194.

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in the most rigorous season, equally with the mildest, and that the innumerable multitudes who issued from its frontiers, almost always provided for their daily wants from the country through which they passed.

Immense Issues of Assignats to uphold these great Expenses.

Nothing could have enabled the government to make head against such expenses, but the system of assignats, which in effect, for the time, gave them the disposal of all the wealth of France.* The funds on which this enormous paper circulation was based, embracing all the confiscated property in the kingdom, in lands, houses, and moveables, was estimated at fifteen milliards, or nearly L. 700,000,000 sterling; but in the distracted state of the country, few purchasers could be found for such immense national domains, and, therefore, the security for all practical purposes was merely nominal. The consequence was, that the assignat fell to one-twelfth of its real value; in other words, an assignat for twenty-four francs, was only worth two francs; that is, a note for a pound was worth only 1s. 8d. As all the payments, both to and by government, were made in this depreciated currency, and, as it constituted the chief, and in many places, the sole, circulation of the country, the losses to creditors or receivers of money of every description became enormous;[1] and, in fact, the public expenses were defrayed out of the chasm made in their private fortunes. It was evident, that such a state of things could not continue permanently; and, accordingly, the national ex-

[1] Th. vii. 239.

* The monthly expenses of the war had risen to 200,000,000 francs, or nearly L. 8,000,000, while the income was only 60,000,000, or L. 2,400,000; an enormous deficit, amounting to L. 75,000,000 in the year, which was supplied only by the incessant issue of paper money, bearing, by law, a forced circulation. There were 7,500,000,000 of francs, or L. 330,000,000 in circulation; the sum in the treasury was still 500,000,000, or L. 20,000,000; so that the amount issued by government was eight milliards, or L. 350,000,000 sterling.—Toul. v. 194. Th. vii. 239.

haustion appeared in the campaign of 1795, and the Republic would have sunk under the failure of its financial resources in a few years, had not the genius of Napoleon discovered a new mode of maintaining the armies, and by making war maintain war, converted a suffering defensive, into an irresistible aggressive power. CHAP. XVI. 1794.

At the commencement of the campaign, the Allies were an overmatch for the French at every point, and the superiority of their discipline was more especially evident in the movements and attacks of large masses. That their enterprises were not conducted with skill; that they suffered under the jealousies and division of the cabinets which directed their movements; and that by adhering to the ruinous system of extending their forces, and a war of position, they threw away all the advantages which might have arisen from the number and experience of their forces, must appear evident to the most careless observer. The fate of the campaign in Flanders was decided by the detachment of Jourdan, with forty thousand men from the Meuse, to reinforce the army of the Sambre; what then might have been expected, if Cobourg had early concentrated his forces for a vigorous attack in Flanders, or the immense masses which lay inactive on the Rhine, been brought to bear on the general fortune of the campaign?[1] Progressive increase of the French Forces during the Campaign.

[1] Jom. vi. 330, 338.

But it may be doubted whether, by any exertions, the Allies' cause could have been finally made triumphant in France at this period. The time for energetic measures was past; the revolutionary fever was burning with full fury, and 1,500,000 men were in arms to defend the Republic. By bringing up column after column to the attack; by throwing away with merciless prodigality the lives of the conscripts; by The Period of Success for the Allies was past.

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sparing neither blood nor treasure to accomplish their objects; by drawing without scruple upon the wealth of one-half of France by confiscation, and of the other by assignats, the Committee of Public Safety had produced a force, which was for the time unconquerable. By a more energetic and combined system of warfare, the Allies might have broken through the frontier on more than one point, and wrested from France her frontier fortresses; but they would probably have found in the heart of the country, a resistance, which would in the end have proved their ruin. What might have been easily done by vigorous measures in 1792 or 1793, could not have been accomplished by any exertions in 1794, after the great levies of the Convention had come into the field, and the energy of revolution was turned into military confidence by the successes which had concluded the preceding campaign.

General Reflections on the Campaign.

It deserves notice too, what signal benefit accrued to France in this campaign from its central position, and the formidable barrier of fortified towns with which it was surrounded. By possessing an interior, while the Allies were compelled to act on an exterior line, the French government was enabled to succour the weak parts of their frontier, and could bring their troops to bear in overwhelming masses on one point, while their opponents, moving round a larger circumference, charged with the protection of different kingdoms, and regulated by distant, and often discordant cabinets, were unable to make corresponding movements to resist them. Thus, the transference of the army, which conquered at Toulon, to the Eastern Pyrenees; of the divisions of the army of Savoy to the Rhine; of Jourdan's corps to the Sambre; and of the garrison of Mayence to Nantes; the immediate causes of the successes in Catalonia, the Palatinate, Flanders

and La Vendée, successively took place, without any corresponding movement having been made in the Allied Forces opposed to them, to reinforce the threatened quarters. Each division of the Allied Forces, delighted at being relieved from the pressure under which it had previously suffered, relapsed into a state of inactivity, without ever recollecting, that with an active and enterprising enemy, a serious defeat at one point was a disaster at all.

Great Military Effect of the French Fortresses.

The Archduke Charles has said that the great superiority of France, in a military point of view, arises from the chain of fortresses with which it is surrounded, whereby it is enabled, with equal facility, to throw delays in the way of an invasion of their own, and to find a solid base for an irruption into their neighbour's territory; and that the want of such a barrier on the right bank of the Rhine is the principal defect in the system of German defence.[1] The campaign of 1794 affords a striking confirmation of this observation. After having driven the French forces, during the campaign of 1793, from the field, and compelled them to seek shelter in intrenched camps, or fortified towns, the Allies were so much impeded by the siege of the fortresses which lay in their road, that they were compelled to halt in their career of success; and France had time to complete the vast armaments which afterwards proved so fatal to Europe. When the Republic, on the other hand, became the invading power, in 1794, the want of any fortified towns to resist their progress, enabled them to overrun Flanders, and drive the Allies, in a few weeks, beyond the Rhine. This consideration is of vital importance, both in the estimate of the relative power of France and the neighbouring states, and in all measures intended to restrain its ambitious projects.

[1] Archduke Charles, i. p. 274.

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There are few spectacles in nature so sublime as that of a people bravely combating for their liberties, against a powerful and vindictive enemy. That spectacle was exhibited in the most striking manner by the French nation during this campaign. The same impartial justice which condemns with unmeasured severity, the bloody internal, must admire the dignified and resolute external conduct of the Convention. With unbending firmness they coerced alike internal revolt, and foreign violence; and selecting out of the innumerable ranks of their defenders the most worthy, laid the foundation of that illustrious school of military chiefs who afterwards sustained the fortunes of the empire. It is melancholy to be obliged to admit, that it was this cruelty which was one cause of their triumphs; and that the fortunes of the Republic might have sunk under its difficulties, but for the inflexible severity with which they overawed the discontented; and the iron rule of terror, which drew out of the agonies of the state the means of its ultimate deliverance. The impartial justice of Providence apparently made that terrific period the means of punishing the national sins of both the contending parties; and while the sufferings of the Republic were the worthy retribution of its cruelty, the triumphs to which they led brought deserved chastisement on those powers, who had sought, in that suffering, the means of unjust aggrandizement.

CHAPTER XVII.

WAR IN POLAND.

ARGUMENT.

Immense extent of Poland in former times—Causes of its continual Disasters—It has retained the Pastoral and Independent Character unmixed—Representative system arose from the Councils of the Church—No intermixture of Foreign Customs in Poland—Its Society differently constructed from any in Europe—They still retain the Taste and Habits of the Nomade Tribes—Their early and indomitable Democratic Spirit—The Clergy formed a different Body from any in Europe—Nobility never engaged in any Profession or Trade, which all fell into the hands of the Jews—Liberty and Equality the early Passion of the People—No Hereditary Offices admitted in the Nobility—Crown ultimately became Elective—General Assemblies of the People—The Liberum Veto—Representative system never thoroughly Established—Pledges universally exacted from the Deputies: and they were regularly called to account for their Conduct—Great increase of the Democratic Power at the close of the Eighteenth Century—Forces of the Republic—Their long and desperate Wars with the Asiatic Tribes—Their weakness early suggested the idea of Dismemberment to the adjoining States—Great Exploits of John Sobieski—His Prophetic anticipation of the Partition of Poland from its Democratic Divisions—With him the Polish Power was extinguished—Excessive Democratic Strife after his Death—Increasing Weakness and Anarchy of the Republic; which made their Partition in 1772 easy—When too late, they abandon their ruinous Democratic Privileges—Commencement of their last Struggle—They take up Arms from despair, and elect Kosciusko as a Leader—He Defeats the Russians at Raslawice—Warsaw is taken by the Insurgents—Poles in the Russian Army disbanded—Great exertions of Kosciusko—Want of a large Regular Force proved fatal to him—Russians and Prussians advance against Warsaw, but are compelled to raise the Siege—Suwarrow defeats one of their Corps, and Kosciusko is routed and made Prisoner at Maciowice—Patriots shut themselves up in Warsaw—Storming of Praga and Warsaw by Suwarrow—Atrocious massacre by the Russians—Great sensation produced by the Fall of Warsaw in Europe—Poland fell the victim of Democratic madness and oppression—Striking contrast afforded by the steady growth of Russia—Subsequent punishment of the partitionary Powers—Gallant spirit of the exiled Polish bands—Comparison of Polish and English history—Disastrous Effect of the Polish War on the Coalition against France.

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PROVIDENCE has so interwoven human affairs, that when we wish to retrace the revolutions of a people, and to investigate the causes of their grandeur or misfortune, we are insensibly conducted step by

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step to their cradle. The slightest consideration of the History of Poland must be sufficient to prove, that that great nation, always combating, often victorious, but never securing its conquests, has from the earliest times been on the decline.[1] It emerged from the shock which overthrew the Roman Empire, valiant, powerful, and extensive; from that hour it has invariably drooped, until at length it became the victim of its ancient provinces.

[1] Salvandy, i. 18.

Immense extent of Poland in former times.

The kingdom of Poland formerly extended from the Borysthenes to the Danube, and from the Euxine to the Baltic. The Sarmatia of the ancients, it embraced within its bosom the original seat of those nations which subverted the Roman Empire; Prussia, Moravia, Bohemia, Hungary, the Ukraine, Courland, Livonia, are all fragments of its mighty dominion. The Goths, who appeared as suppliants on the Danube, and were ferried across by Roman hands never to recede; the Huns, who under Attila spread desolation through the empire; the Sclavonians, who overspread the greater part of Europe, emerged from its vast and uncultivated plains. But its subsequent progress has but ill corresponded to such a commencement: while, in all other states, liberty, riches, power, and glory, have advanced with equal steps, and the victories of one age have contributed to the advancement of that which succeeded it; in Poland, alone, the greatest triumphs have been immediately succeeded by the greatest reverses; the establishment of its internal freedom has led to nothing but external disaster, and the deliverer of Europe in one age was in the next swept from the book of nations.

Causes of its continued Disasters.

This extraordinary history has all arisen from one cause,—that Poland has retained, till a very recent period, the independence and equality of savage life.

It has neither been subjugated by more polished, nor itself vanquished more civilized states. The equality and valour of the pastoral character have, in their native plains, remained unchanged during fifteen hundred years, neither grafted on the stock of urban liberty, nor moulded by the institutions of civilized society. Poland shows what in its original state was the equality of pastoral life: Neither the resistance, nor the tastes, nor the intelligence, nor the blood of vanquished nations, have altered in its inhabitants the inclinations and passions of the savage character. We may see in its history what would have been the fate of all the Northern nations, if their fierce and unbending temper had not been tempered by the blood, and moulded by the institutions of a more advanced civilisation; and in the anarchy of its diets, what would have been the representative system, had the dream of Montesquieu been well-founded, that it was found in the woods.[1]

[1] Salv. i. 29.

It has retained the Pastoral and independent Character unmixed.

The shepherds who wandered in the plains of Sarmatia were, like all other pastoral tribes, inflamed by the strongest passion for that savage freedom, which consists in leading a life exempt from all control—in wandering at will over boundless plains, resting where they chose, and departing when they wished. In their incursions into the Roman provinces they collected immense troops of captives, who were compelled to perform the works of drudgery, in which their masters disdained to engage; to attend the cattle, drive the waggons, and make the arms. Their imperious lords, acknowledging no superior themselves, knew no restraint in the treatment of their inferiors. With the same energy they asserted that tyranny over that unhappy race, with which they would have resisted any attempt to encroach on their own independence. Such

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as Poland then was, it has ever since continued,—a race of jealous freemen, and iron-bound slaves; a wild democracy ruling a captive people.

"——— Ferrea juga
Insanumque Forum."

Representative System arose from the Christian Councils.

It is a mistake to suppose that the representative system was found in the woods. What was found there was not any thing resembling parliaments, but Polish equality. The pastoral nations of the North, equally with the citizens of the Republics of antiquity, had no idea of the exercise of the rights of freemen, but by the concourse of *all* the citizens. Of course this privilege could only be exercised by a small number of them when the state became populous, and hence the narrow base on which with them the fabric of liberty was framed. The assemblies of the Champs-de-Mai, accordingly, equally with the early convocations of the Normans in England, were attended by all the freemen who held of the king; and sixty thousand Norman horsemen assembled at Winchester, to deliberate with the conqueror concerning the vanquished kingdom.[1] This was the original system in all the European states, and this is what the Polish diet has always continued. It was the Christian Church, the parent of so many lofty doctrines and new ideas, which had the glory of offering to the world, amidst the wreck of ancient institutions, the model of a form of government, which gives to all interests the right of suffrage, by establishing a system which may embrace the remotest interests; which preserves the energy, and avoids the principal evils of democracy; which maintains the Tribune, and shuns the strife of the Forum. The Christian councils were the first example of representative assemblies; there were united the whole Roman world; there a priesthood, which

1 Thierry, ii. 286.

embraced the civilized earth, assembled by means of delegates to deliberate on the affairs of the Universal Church. When Europe revived, it adopted the same model. Every nation, by degrees, borrowed the customs of the Church, then the sole depository of the traditions of civilisation. It was the religion of the vanquished people; it was the clergy who instructed them in this admirable system, which flourished in the councils of Nice, Sardis, and Byzantium, centuries before it was heard of in the Western World, and which did not arise in the woods of Germany, but in the catacombs of Rome during the sufferings of the primitive Church.[1]

[1] Salv. i. 107, 108.

Vienna was the frontier station of the Roman empire. It never extended into the Sarmatian wilds, and hence the chief cause of the continued calamities of their descendants. It was the infusion of the free spirit of the Scythian tribes into the decaying provinces of the Roman empire, and the union of barbaric energy with antiquated civilisation, which produced the glories of modern Europe. In Poland alone, savage independence remained unmoulded by foreign admixture, and the customs of the earliest ages continued unchanged down to the partition of the monarchy. After representative assemblies had been established for centuries in Germany, France, and England, the Poles adhered to the ancient custom of summoning every free man to discuss sword in hand the affairs of the Republic. An hundred thousand horsemen met in the field of Volo, near Warsaw, to deliberate on public affairs, and the distractions of these stormy diets weakened the nation even more than the attacks of its foreign enemies. Among them was established, to their sorrow, the real system which was invented in the woods.[2]

No intermixture of Foreign Customs in Poland.

[2] Salv. i. 109. Rulh. i. 10, 14.

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In Poland, accordingly, the structure of society was essentially different from that which obtained in any other part of Europe. The feudal system, the chain of military dependence from the throne to the cottage, was there unknown. The Republic was composed entirely of two classes, the one destined to labour, dejection, and servitude, the other to independence, activity, and war. That iron band which held together the discordant elements of modern society, which united the vanquished strong in their civilisation, their laws, and their religion, and the victors strong in their power, their valour, and their conquests; which bound alike the nobility and the priesthood, the municipalities, and the throne; which in the wisdom of Providence, amidst many evils, produced innumerable blessings, was wanting to the Poles, and thence it is, that Poland is no more. Thence it was that she exhibited the spectacle of a nation without a people, since the numerous class of slaves could not deserve that name; of armies alike without discipline, infantry, or artillery; of a state undefended by frontier towns; of cities without a race of burghers, without commerce or industry; of a republic where the supreme power was annihilated, and the checks to it omnipotent.[1]

Its society differently constructed from any in Europe.

[1] Salv. i. 31. Rulh. i. 14.

The taste and the habits of the Nomade tribes have, almost to our time, predominated among the Poles. Their language, their manners, even their dress, long remained unchanged,—the frequent use of furs, the flowing pelisse, caps of the skins of wild beasts, the absence of linen, and the magnificence of their arms, are the characteristics of their national costume. Till within these few years they wore the singular crown of hair, which in the time of the Scythians encircled their bare heads. The passion for a wandering life

They still retain the taste and habits of the Nomade Tribes.

has been transmitted to their latest posterity, and remains undiminished amidst all the refinements of civilisation. To travel in the country, living in tents, to pass from one encampment to another, has been in every age one of the most favourite amusements of the Polish noblesse; and it was in such occupations that the last years of the great Sobieski were employed.[1]

[1] Salv. i. 39.

This fierce and unbending race of freemen preserved inviolate, as the Magna Charta of Poland, the right to assemble in person, and deliberate on the public affairs of the state. The terrible assembly, where all the proprietors of the soil were convoked, constituted at once the military strength of the nation in war, and its legislature in peace. There were discussed alike the public concerns of the republic, the private feuds or grievances of individuals, the questions of peace or war, the formation of laws, the division of plunder, and the election of the sovereign.[2]

[2] Rulh.i.15.

Their early and indomitable Democratic Spirit.

In the eyes of this haughty race, the will of a freeman was a thing which no human power should attempt to subjugate; and therefore the fundamental principle of all their deliberations was, that unanimity was essential to every resolution. This relic of savage equality, of which the traces are still to be found in the far-famed jury system of England, was productive of incalculable evils to the republic; and yet so blind are men to the cause of their own ruin, that it was uniformly adhered to with enthusiastic resolution by the Poles, and is even spoken of with undisguised admiration by their national historians. But all human institutions must involve some methods of extricating public affairs, and as unanimity was not to be expected among so numerous and empassioned a body as their diet, and the idea was not

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to be entertained for a moment of constraining the will of any citizen, they adopted the only other method of expediting business, they massacred the recusant. This measure appeared to them an incomparably lesser evil, than carrying measures by a majority. "Because," said they, "acts of violence are few in number, and affect only the individual sufferers; but if once the precedent is established of compelling the minority to yield to the majority, there is an end to any security for the liberties of the people."[1]

[1] Salv. i. 40. Rulh. i. 11, 24.

It may easily be imagined what discords and divisions were nursed up under such a system. Fanned by the flame excited at all their national diets, the different provinces of the republic have in every age nourished the most profound animosity against each other. The waywods and palatinates into which every province was divided for the administration of justice, or the arrangements of war, became divided among each other, and transmitted the feuds of the earliest times to their remotest descendants. "That Hierarchy of enmities," as the Poles expressed it, descended even to private families; in the progress of time, religious discord divided the whole republic into two parties nearly equal in strength, and implacable in hostility, and Poland became an immense field of combat, destined never to know either tranquillity or truce till it passed under the yoke of a foreign master.[2]

[2] Salv. i. 41. Rulh. i. 25.

Clergy formed a different body from any in Europe.

The clergy, that important body who have done so much for the freedom of Europe, never formed a separate order, or possessed any spiritual influence in Poland. Composed entirely of the nobles, they had no sympathy with the serfs, whom they disdained to admit to any of their sacred offices. Their bishops interfered, not as prelates but as barons, not with the

wand of peace, but the sword of dissension. The priesthood formed in their stormy diets a sort of tribunes, subject to the passions of the multitude, but exempt, by reason of their sacred character, from the danger which formed a check upon their extravagance. This was another consequence of the Poles not having settled in a conquered country; the clergy of the other European states, drawn from the vanquished people, formed a link between them and their conquerors, and by reason of the influence which their intellectual superiority conferred, gradually softened the yoke of bondage to the vanquished; the Polish priesthood, formed entirely of the nobility, added to the chains of slavery the fetters of barbaric superstition.[1]

[1] Salv. i. 62.

As if every thing was destined to concur for the disorganization of Poland, the inequality of fortunes, and the rise of urban industry, the source of so much benefit to all the other European monarchies, was there productive only of positive evil. Fearful of being compelled to divide their power with the inferior classes of society, when elevated by riches and intelligence, the nobles affixed the stigma of dishonour to every lucrative or useful profession. Their maxim was, that nobility is not lost by indigence, or domestic servitude, but is totally destroyed by commerce and industry; their constant policy was to debar the serfs from all knowledge of the use of arms, both because they had learned to fear, and because they continued to despise them. In fine, the Polish nobility, strenuously resisting every species of power as a usurpation, every kind of industry as a degradation, every attempt at superiority as an outrage, remained to the close of their career at open variance with all the principles on which the prosperity of society depends.[2]

Nobility never engaged in any Profession or Trade.

[2] Salv. i. 72, 73.

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As some species of industry however is indispensable where wealth has begun to accumulate; and as the vast possessions of the nobility gave great encouragement to those who would minister to their wants, the labour of towns insensibly increased, and an urban population gradually arose. But as the nobles were too proud, and the serfs too indigent, to engage in such employments, they fell exclusively into the hands of a foreign race, who were willing to submit to the degradation for the sake of the profit. The Jews spread like a leprosy over the country, monopolizing every lucrative employment, excluding the peasantry from the chance even of bettering their condition by changing their employment; and superadding to the instinctive aversion of the free citizens at every species of labour, the horror connected with the occupations of that hateful race. Thus, the rise of towns, and the privileges of corporations, the origin of free institutions, in so many other countries, were there productive only of evil, by augmenting the disinclination of all classes to engage in their occupations; the Jews multiplied in a country where they were enabled to engross all the industrial occupations; and at this moment above half of the whole descendants of Abraham are to be found in what formerly were the Polish dominions.[1]

Which all fell into the hands of the Jews.

[1] Salv. i. 84, 85.

Five hundred years before liberty and equality became the watch-word of the French Revolution, they were the favourite principles of the Polish republic. Anarchy and disorder did not prevail in the country, because the throne was elective, but the throne became elective, because the people were too jealous of their privileges to admit of hereditary succession. For an hundred and sixty years the race of the Jagellons sat on the throne of Poland, with as regular a succession

as the Plantagenets of England; and the dynasty of the Piasts enjoyed the government for four hundred years; but all the efforts of the monarchs of these houses were unequal to the formation of a regular government. Contrary to what obtained in every other part of the world, it was always the great Kings of Poland who were ultimately overthrown; and their reigns which were the most stormy of its annals. The supreme authority, which elsewhere in the progress of civilisation, was strengthened by the spoils of feudal power, became in Poland only weakened by the lapse of time. All the efforts of aggrandizement of their greatest monarchs, were shattered against the compact, independent, and courageous body of nobles, whom the crown could neither overawe by menaces, nor subdue by violence. In the plenitude of their democratic spirit, they would for long admit no distinction among themselves, but that which arose from actual employment; and never recognised, till a very recent period, the titles and honours which, in other states, have long been hereditary. Even when they were established, the jurisdictions were only for life. Their waywods, or military chieftains, their palatines, or leaders of counties, their castellans, or governors of castles, enjoyed, from the earliest period down to recent times, their authority for that period only. These officers, far from being able in Poland, as in other states, to render their dignities hereditary, were not always even nominated by the King. Their authority, especially that of the palatines, gave equal umbrage to the monarchs whom they were bound to obey, as the nobles whom they were intended to lead. There was thus authority and power nowhere in the state. The kings of the Piasts made frequent and able efforts to create a gradation of rank in the midst

Liberty and Equality the early Principles of the People.

No Hereditary Offices admitted in the Nobility.

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of that democracy, and a body of burghers by the side of these nobles; but all their attempts proved ineffectual. A race of monarchs, whose succession was frequently interrupted, and authority always contested, could not carry on any systematic plan of government; while, unlike all other states, it was the people who there maintained a systematic and uniform line of conduct.[1]

[1] Rulh. i. 5, 14, 24. Salv. i. 71, 72, 128.

Crown ultimately became Elective.

The crown of Poland, though enjoyed long by the great families of the Jagellons and the Piasts, has always been elective. The King enjoyed the disposal of all offices in the republic; and a principal part of his duty consisted in going from province to province to administer justice in person. "By my faith," said Henry of Valois, when elected to the throne, "these Poles have made me nothing but a Judge!" But the nobility themselves carried into execution all his sentences with their own armed force. The command of the armies was not in general conferred upon the sovereign; and as there never was any considerable standing army in the service of the republic, the military force of the throne was altogether nugatory.[2]

[2] Rulh. i. 17, 18, 19.

General Assemblies of the People.

But the insurmountable evil, which in every age has opposed the formation of a regular government in this unhappy country, was the privilege, too firmly established to be ever shaken, which all the citizens had, of assembling together to deliberate on the affairs of the state. So far from adopting the prudent maxim of all regular governments, that a civil war is the greatest of evils, they have by this institution given to their insurrections a legal form. From generation to generation the maxim has been handed down by the Poles:—"Burn your houses, and wander over the country with your arms in your hand, rather than submit to the smallest infringement on your liberties."

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These assemblies, when once met, united in themselves the powers of all the magistrates; they were to that republic what the dictatorship was to ancient Rome. A Pole, compelled to submit to a plurality of suffrages, would consider himself subjected to the most grievous despotism; and consequently no resolution of the diet was binding, unless it was unanimously agreed to by all the citizens. Any citizen, by the privilege of the *liberum veto*, had the power of dissolving the most numerous of these assemblies, or negativing their most important acts; and although the Poles were fully sensible of the ruinous nature of this privilege, and pursued with eternal maledictions the individual who exercised it, yet they never could be prevailed upon to abandon it.[1]

The *Liberum Veto*.

[1] Rulh. i. 18, 24. Salv. i. 111.

These assemblies, so famous in Polish history, so fatal to her inhabitants, presented so extraordinary a spectacle, that it is hardly possible, in reading even the most authentic descriptions of them, to believe that we have not stepped into the regions of Eastern romance. The plain of Volo, to the west of Warsaw, says Salvandy, had been the theatre, from the earliest times, of the popular elections. Soon the impatient pospolite covered that vast extent with its waves, like an army prepared to commence an assault on a fortified town. The innumerable piles of arms; the immense tables round which faction united its supporters; a thousand jousts with the javelin or the lance; a thousand squadrons engaged in mimic war; a thousand parties of palatines, governors of castles, and other dignified authorities, who traversed the ranks distributing exhortations, party songs, and largesses; a thousand cavalcades of gentlemen, who rode, according to custom, with their battle-axes by their sides, and discussed at the gallop the dearest interests of the

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republic; innumerable quarrels, originating in drunkenness, and terminating in blood: Such were the scenes of tumult, amusement, and war,—a faithful mirror of Poland,—which, as far as the eye could reach, filled the plain.

The arena was closed in by a vast circle of tents, which embraced, as in an immense girdle, the plain of Volo, the shores of the Vistula, and the spires of Warsaw. The horizon seemed bounded by a range of snowy mountains, of which the summits were portrayed in the hazy distance by their dazzling whiteness. Their camp formed another city, with its markets, its gardens, its hotels, and its monuments. There the great displayed their Oriental magnificence; the nobles, the palatines, vied with each other in the splendour of their horses and equipage; and the stranger who beheld for the first time that luxury, worthy of the last and greatest of the Nomade people, was never weary of admiring the immense hotels, the porticoes, the colonnades, the galleries of painted or gilded stuffs, the castles of cotton and silk, with their drawbridges, towers, and ditches.[1]

[1] Salv. ii. 190.

On the day of the elections the three orders mounted on horseback. The princes, the palatines, the bishops, the prelates, proceeded towards the plain of Volo, surrounded by eighty thousand mounted citizens, any one of whom might, at the expiry of a few hours, find himself King of Poland. They all bore in their countenances, even under the livery or banners of a master, the pride arising from that ruinous privilege. The European dress nowhere appeared on that solemn occasion. The children of the desert strove to hide the furs and skins in which they were clothed under chains of gold and the glitter of jewels. Their bonnets were composed of panther-skin; plumes of

eagles or herons surmounted them: on their front were the most splendid precious stones. Their robes of sable or ermine were bound with velvet or silver: their girdle studded with jewels; over all their furs were suspended chains of diamonds. One hand of each nobleman was without a glove; on it was the splendid ring on which the arms of his family were engraved; the mark, as in ancient Rome, of the equestrian order; another proof of the intimate connexion between the race, the customs, and the traditions of the northern tribes, and the founders of the Eternal City.

But nothing in this rivalry of magnificence could equal the splendour of their arms. Double poniards, double scymitars, set with brilliants; bucklers of costly workmanship, battle-axes enriched in silver, and glittering with emeralds and sapphires; bows and arrows richly gilt, which were borne at festivals, in remembrance of the ancient customs of the country, were to be seen on every side. The horses shared in this melange of barbarism and refinement; sometimes cased in iron, at others decorated with the richest colours, they bent under the weight of the sabres, the lances, and javelins by which the senatorial order marked their rank. The bishops were distinguished by their grey or green hats, and yellow or red pantaloons, magnificently embroidered with divers colours. Often they laid aside their pastoral habits, and signalized their address as young cavaliers, by the beauty of their arms, and the management of their horses. In that crowd of the equestrian order, there was no gentleman so humble as not to try to rival this magnificence. Many carried, in furs and arms, their whole fortunes on their backs. Numbers had sold their votes to some of the candidates, for the vanity of appearing with some additional ornament before their fellow-ci-

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tizens. And the people, whose dazzled eyes beheld all this magnificence, were almost without clothing; their long beards, naked legs, and filth, indicated, even more strongly than their pale visages and dejected air, all the miseries of servitude.[1]

[1] Salv. ii. 190–197.

Representative System never thoroughly established.

At length the utter impossibility of getting any thing done with these immense assemblies of 100,000 citizens on horseback, and the experienced difficulty of finding them subsistence for any considerable time, led to the introduction, to a certain extent, of the representative system. This change took place in the year 1467, about two hundred years after it had been established in England, and a hundred and eighty after its introduction into Germany. Unfortunately, however, it never prevailed generally in the kingdom, and was accompanied with such restrictions as tended to increase rather than diminish the divisions of the people. The labouring classes were not at all represented; and the nobility never abandoned, and frequently exercised their rights of assembling in person on all important occasions. These general diets being, after this change, rarer, were more generally attended; and, as they were assembled only on extraordinary occasions, as the election of a King, or a question of peace or war, the passions of the people were increased by the importance of their suffrages, and inexperience added to the sudden intoxication of absolute power.[2]

[2] Rulh. i. 23. Salv. i. 110, 113.

Pledges universally exacted from the Deputies.

In the true spirit of their democratic institutions, the Poles had no sooner established a representative system, than they surrounded it with such checks, as not only rendered it totally useless, but positively hurtful. Not unfrequently the electors, terrified at the powers with which they had invested their representatives, hastened, sword in hand, to the place of

their meeting, prepared, if necessary, to oppose open force to the laws. These stormy assemblages were called "Diets under the buckler." The representatives continued in the new assemblies, the ruinous law of unanimity, in spite of the advice of the wisest men, and in opposition to their continual remonstrances. This power of course was more fully exercised by one among four hundred deputies, who was intrusted with the interest of an extensive palatinate, than by an insulated individual amidst an hundred thousand of his fellow-citizens. The check, too, which the terror of being massacred, imposed upon the exercise of this right in the primary assemblies, was removed when in the Chamber of Deputies, uplifted sabres were no longer ready to exterminate the recusant. Moreover the electors, with the jealousy of the democratic spirit, uniformly exacted from every representative a pledge how he was to vote on every question that came before the Assembly; and after every session held what they called *post comitial diets*, the object of which was to call him to account for the vote he had given on every occasion. In these diets they ran the most imminent risk of being massacred, if they had deviated at all from the instructions they had received.[1]

And they were regularly called to account for their Conduct.

[1] Rulh. i. 24–26. Salv. i. 114.

The sense of this danger made the deputies adhere strictly to the orders they had received; and as their instructions were extremely various, the practical result was, that unanimity was impossible, and business could not be carried through. To avoid this, the majority, in some instances, proceeded by main force to pass measures in spite of the minority; but, as this was deemed a direct violation of the constitution, it invariably led to civil war. Confederations of the minorities were established, diets appointed, marshals elect-

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ed, and these deplorable factions, which alternately had the king a chief and a captive, were regarded as a constitutional mode of extricating the rights of the people. This right of opposition, in the space of two centuries, had the effect of utterly annihilating every other power in the government. The deputies, without ever having made a direct attack upon the throne; without ever having attempted to wrest from the king or the senate the power allotted to them in the constitution, succeeded at length in suspending and neutralizing every other branch of the Legislature. The popular attachment to the veto augmented with the progress of wealth, and the increasing opulence of the great families who composed the senate; as it reduced all the citizens, at least on some occasions, to a state of perfect equality. The only astonishing thing is, that, with such institutions, the valour of the Polish nobility should so long have concealed the weakness arising from their unruly disposition; one would imagine, that a people with such a government could not exist a year, and yet they seemed never wearied either of victories or folly.[1]

[1] Rulh. i. 26, 27. Salv. i. 115.

Great increase of the Democratic Power at the close of the Sixteenth Century.

The political crisis which, at the close of the sixteenth century, convulsed all Europe, reinstated the Poles at once in all their ruinous democratic privileges, which the influence of their preceding monarchs had somewhat impaired. In the year 1573, on the death of the last race of the Jagellons, the nation at once reasserted and obtained all its original immunities. The command of the armies, and the administration of justice, were taken from the crown; two hetmans appointed, one for Lithuania, and one for Poland; each invested with an absolute command over the forces of these rival provinces of the republic, and too often, by their jealousies, marred the effect of their

most glorious triumphs; while the administration of justice was vested in great supreme tribunals, composed of the nobility, who were changed every fifteen months, by new elections, as if to prevent justice ever being administered by those who had any acquaintance with law. Two standing armies were appointed, one for Lithuania, the other for Poland; but hardly amounting in all to ten thousand men; and even for these, the jealousy of the nobility would only permit them to vote the most scanty supplies, which required to be renewed at each successive diet. In consequence of this circumstance, the Poles never had an army on which they could rely, worthy either of the name or the strength of the republic. Their forces were composed of five parts; the national troops, or a small body of regular soldiers paid and equipped by the republic; the pospolite, or general assembly of all the free citizens on horseback; the armed valets, whose rapine in general did more harm than their courage did service; the artillery, which was generally in the most wretched condition; and the mercenaries, composed chiefly of Germans, whose services would have been of great importance, had their fidelity been secured by regularity of pay. The whole body of the pospolite, the volunteers, the *valets d'armée*, and a large portion of the mercenaries and national troops, served on horseback. The heavy cavalry, in particular, constituted the strength of the armies; there were to be found united, riches, splendour, and number. They were divided into cuirassiers and hussars; the former clothed in steel, man and horse bearing casque and cuirass, lance and sabre, bows and carbines; the latter defended only by a twisted hauberk, which descended from the head, over the shoulders and breast, and armed with a sabre and pistol. Both were dis-

Forces of the Republic.

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tinguished by the splendour of their dress and equipage, and the number and costly array of their mounted servants, accoutred in the most bizarre manner, with huge black plumes, and skins of bears and other wild beasts. It was the boast of this body, that they were composed of men, all measured, as they expressed it, by the same standard; that is, equally enjoying the rights to obey only their God and their swords, and equally destined, perhaps, to step one day into the throne of the Piasts and the Jagellons; and that if the heaven itself were to fall, they would support it on the point of their lances. The hussars and cuirassiers were called *Towarzirz*, that is, companions; they called each other by that name, and they were designated in the same way by the sovereign, whose chief boast would be *Primus inter pares*, the first among equals.[1]

[1] Salv. i. 125, 129. Rulh. i. 30, 33.

But all these forces were in general in the most miserable state of destitution. The regular army, almost always without pay, was generally without discipline, and totally destitute of every kind of equipment; the castles and fortified towns had no other defences but walls, which age had almost everywhere reduced to ruin; the arsenals were in general empty; all those great establishments, which in other states bespeak the constant vigilance of government, were awanting. Poland had no other resource but those armed confederations, which, nevertheless, frequently saved the republic in the midst of the greatest perils; and more than once, through the unconquerable valour of the nobles, preserved the liberties of Europe from the Ottoman power.[2]

[2] Rulh. i. 50.

The physical situation of the Poles was singularly ill calculated to arrest the course of these disorders. Placed on the frontiers of European civilisation; re-

moved from the sea, or any commercial intercourse with other states, they had to maintain a constant and perilous war with the hordes who threatened Christendom, from the deserts of Asia. Their history is one uninterrupted series of desperate contests with the Muscovites, the Tartars, and the Turks; in the course of which they were repeatedly brought to the brink of ruin, and saved only by those desperate efforts which distinguished the Polish history from that of all other states in modern times. The frequency and murderous nature of these conflicts, blighted every attempt at rural industry, and chained the nation, even in recent times, to those irregular, and warlike habits, which had been abandoned centuries before, in all the other monarchies of Europe. Religious fury added grievously to these disastrous struggles, and the revolt of the Cossacks of the Ukraine, consequent on the schism between the Greek and the Catholic church, brought the republic to the verge of destruction, and finally led to the incorporation of their vast territory with the Muscovite dominion.[1]

Their long and desperate Wars with the Asiatic Tribes.

[1] Rulh. i. 36, 38, 64.

Weakened in this manner in these contests with their enemies, equally by their freedom as their tyranny, knowing of liberty nothing but its licentiousness, of government but its weakness; inferior to all around them, not less in numbers than in discipline, the Poles were the only warlike nation in the world to whom victory never brought either conquests or peace. Unceasing combats with the Germans, the Hungarians, the Muscovites, the Pirates of the North, all of whom regarded the republic as a common prey, fill their annals. They successively saw Bohemia, Mecklenburg, Moravia, Brandenburg, Pomerania, Silesia, the Ukraine, and Red Russia, melt away from their dominion, without ever once thinking of establishing such

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a steady government as might secure the various parts of their vast possessions. Incapable of foresight, they saw their neighbours daily increasing in strength, without making any effort to keep pace with their progress. Blindly attached to their customs, they were destined to drink to the dregs the bitter consequences of a pitiless aristocracy, and a senseless equality.[1]

[1] Salv. i. 74.

Their weakness early suggested the idea of Dismemberment to the adjoining States.

For centuries before their partition at the close of the eighteenth century, the distracted state, and experienced weakness of the Polish republic had suggested to the neighbouring powers the project of dividing its territory. Authentic documents demonstrate that this design was seriously entertained in the time of Louis XIV., and postponed only in consequence of the vast reputation, and heroic character, of John Sobieski, which prolonged the existence of the republic for a hundred years, and threw a ray of glory over its declining fortunes. Of the powers whose unworthy alliance effected the destruction of the oldest republic in the world, all had arisen out of its ruins, or been spared by its arms. Prussia, long a province of Poland, had grown out of the spoils of its ancient ruler; Austria owed to the intervention of a Polish hero its deliverance from the sword of the Mussulman; and long before the French eagles approached the Kremlin, a Polish army had conquered Moscow; and the conflagration of that great capital was but the repetition of what five centuries before had been effected by the vengeance of the Polish nobility.[2] *

[2] Salv. i. 136, and ii. 236. Rulh. i. 59, 60.

* This fearful catastrophe is thus described in the contemporary annalists. "What words can adequately paint the deplorable state to which Moscow was thus reduced. That populous capital, resplendent with riches and numbers, was annihilated in a single day. There remains only smoking ruins; piles covered with ashes and drenched

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Nothing can so strongly demonstrate the wonderful power of democracy as a spring, and its desolating effects, when not compressed by a firm regulator, as the history of John Sobieski. The force which this illustrious champion of Christendom could bring into the field to defend his country from Mahomedan invasion, seldom amounted to fifteen thousand men; and when, previous to the battle of Kotzim, he found himself, by an extraordinary effort, at the head of forty thousand, of whom hardly one-half were well disciplined, the unusual spectacle inspired him with such confidence, that he hesitated not to attack eighty thousand Turkish veterans, strongly intrenched, and gained the greatest victory which had been achieved by the Christian arms since the battle of Ascalon. The troops which he led to the deliverance of Vienna were only eighteen thousand native Poles, and the combined Christian army only numbered seventy thousand combatants; yet with this force he routed 300,000 Turkish soldiers; and broke the Mussulman power so effectually, that for the first time, for three hundred years, the crescent of Mahomet permanently receded, and from that period historians date the decline of the Ottoman empire. Yet, after these glorious triumphs, the ancient divisions of the republic paralysed its strength, the defence of the frontiers was again intrusted to a few thousand undisciplined horsemen; and the Polish nation had the disgrace of allowing its heroic King, the deliverer of Christendom,[1] to be be-

General Exploits of John Sobieski.

[1] Salv. iii. 61, and ii. 137, 141, 372, 454. Rulh. i. 56.

with blood: You see nothing but corpses and churches sacked or half-devoured by the flames. The awful silence of death is interrupted only by the pitiable lamentations of unhappy wretches covered with wounds, a prey to all the agonies of prolonged torture." Is this the description of Moscow in 1382 or 1812, when sacked and destroyed by the Jagellons or Napoleon? Singular destiny of a capital to have been twice the victim of such a catastrophe. See Karamsin, Hist. de Russie, v. 101.

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sieged for months, with fifteen thousand men, by innumerable hordes of barbarians, before the tardy pospolite would advance to his relief.

Sobieski, worn out with his ineffectual endeavours to create a regular government, or establish a permanent force for the protection of Poland, clearly foresaw the future fate of the republic. Before his accession to the throne, he had united with the Primate and sixteen hundred of its principal citizens to overturn the phantom of equality[1] with which they were perpetually opposed, and, to use his own words, "Rescue the republic from the insane tyranny of a plebian noblesse." His reign was one incessant struggle with the principles of anarchy which were implanted in his dominions; and he at length sunk under the experienced impossibity of remedying them. The aged hero, when approaching the grave, to which the ingratitude and dissensions of his subjects accelerated his latter years, expressed himself to the senate in these memorable and prophetic terms:—"He was well acquainted with the griefs of the soul, who declared, that small distresses love to declare themselves, but great are silent. The world will be mute with amazement at the contemplation of us and our councils. Nature herself will be astonished! that beneficent Parent has gifted every living creature with the instinct of self-preservation, and given the most inconsiderable animals arms for their defence: we alone in the universe turn ours against ourselves. That instinct is taken from us, not by any resistless force, not by an inevitable destiny, but by a voluntary insanity, by our own passions, by the desire of mutual destruction. Alas! what will one day be the mournful surprise of posterity to find, that from the summit of glory, from the period when the Polish name filled the universe, our country

[1] Letter, Sobieski to Louis XIV. July 14, 1672. Rulh. i. 53.

His prophetic Anticipation of the Partition of Poland from its Democratic Divisions.

has fallen into ruins, and fallen, alas, for ever! I have been able to gain for you victories; but I feel myself unable to save you from yourselves. Nothing remains to be done but to place in the hands, not of destiny, for I am a Christian, but of a powerful and beneficent Deity, the fate of my beloved country. Believe me, the eloquence of your tribunes, instead of being turned against the throne, would be better directed against those who, by their disorders, are bringing down upon our country the cry of the prophet, which I, alas! hear too clearly rolling over our heads, 'yet forty years and Nineveh will be no more.'"[1]

[1] Salv. iii. 375, 377.

The anticipation of the hero was not exactly accomplished, his own glories, despite the insanity of his subjects, prolonged the existence of Poland for nearly an hundred years. But succeeding events proved every day more clearly the truth of his prediction. His posthumous conquest of the frontier town of Kamieck from the Turks, was the last triumph of the republic. He was also its last national sovereign, and the last who possessed any estimation in the world. With him disappeared both its power and its ascendency among other nations. From that period, successive foreign armies invaded its provinces, and invaded it never to retire. By turns the Saxons, Swedes, Moscovites, Imperialists, and Prussians, ruled its destinies; Poland was no more; according to his own prophecy, it descended into the tomb with the greatest of his sons.[2]

With him the Polish Power was extinguished.

[2] Salv. iii. 455.

Never did a people exhibit a more extraordinary spectacle than the Poles after this period. Two factions were for ever at war: both had to espouse and defend their interests an army; but it was a foreign army, a conquering army, an army conquering without a combat. The inferior noblesse introduced the

Excessive Democratic Strife after his Death.

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Saxons; the greater called in the Swedes; from the day in which Sobieski closed his eyes, strangers never ceased to reign in Poland; its national forces were continually diminishing, and at length totally disappeared. The reason is, that a nation without subjects, is speedily exhausted; the republic at length, composed only of 100,000 citizens, had no more blood to shed even in civil war. No encounters thereafter took place, but between the Swedish, German, or Russian forces; their struggles resembled more the judicial combat of the feudal ages than the contests of powerful nations. The factions of the republic, united on one side round the Swedish, on the other round the Saxon banners, exchanged notes and summonses like belligerent powers. By degrees blood ceased to flow; in these internal divisions, gold was found more effectual than the sword; and to the disgrace of Poland, its later years sunk under the debasement of foreign corruption.[1]

[1] Salv. iii. 479. Rulh. i. 62, 63.

Increasing weakness and anarchy of the Republic.

Pursued to the grave by the phantom of equality, the dissensions of Poland became more violent as it approached its dissolution. The exercise of the *liberum veto* became more frequent every year; it was no longer produced by the vehemence of domestic strife, but by the influence of external corruption. That single word plunged the republic, as if by enchantment, into a lethargic sleep, and every time it was pronounced, it fell for two years into a state of absolute inanition. Faction even went so far as to dissolve the diets in their first sittings, and render their convocation a mere vain formality. All the branches of the government immediately ceased to be under any control; the treasury, the army, the civil authority, released from all control, fell into a state of anarchy. Nothing similar to this ever occurred in any other people. The

legislative power succeeded in destroying itself; and no other power ever ventured to supply its place. The executive, parceled out into many independent and hostile divisions, was incapable of effecting such an usurpation, and if it had, the right of the nation to assemble in open confederation, would immediately have rendered it nugatory.[1]

[1] Rulh. i. 63.

When the adjoining states of Russia and Austria, therefore, effected the first partition of Poland, in 1772, they did not require to conquer a kingdom, but only to take each a share of a state which had fallen to pieces. The election of Stanislaus Poniatowski, in 1764, to the throne of Poland, took place literally under the buckler; but it was under the buckler of the Moscovite, the Cossack, and the Tartar, who overshadowed the plain of Volo with their arms; last and fatal consequence of centuries of anarchy! In vain did the Poles, taught at length by woful experience, attempt, by the advice of Czartoriski, to abandon the fatal privilege of the *liberum veto;* the despots of Russia and Prussia declared that they took the liberties of Poland, and that important right in particular, under their peculiar protection, and perpetuated a privilege which secured their conquest of the kingdom. The inferior noblesse had the madness to invoke the aid of the Empress Catherine, to maintain their ancient privileges against what they called the tyranny of the aristocracy, and Poland, invaded by the two greatest monarchies of Europe, was deprived of the aid of the greater part of its own subjects. The higher nobility, the clergy, the real patriots, made generous efforts, but all in vain; the insane people refused to second them, and one-half of Poland was lost in the struggle.[2]

Which made their Partition in 1772 easy.

[2] Salv. i. 498.

The terrible lesson was not received in vain.

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When too late they abandon their ruinous Democratic Privileges.

Taught by the dismemberment of their territory, what remained of Poland strove to amend their institutions; the *liberum veto* was abandoned, and the nobles themselves, taking the lead in the work of reformation, made a voluntary surrender of their privileges for the public good. The example of the French Revolution had penetrated the wilds of Sarmatia, and a new era seemed to open upon the world from its example. On the 3d May, 1791, a constitution, founded upon the hereditary descent of the throne, the abolition of the *liberum veto*, religious toleration, the emancipation of the bourgeois, and the progressive enfranchisement of the serfs, was proclaimed at Warsaw, amidst the tears of joy of a people who hoped that they had at last found a period to their long misfortunes.[1]

1 Salv. iii. 500.

The Polish reform was so different from the French, that it would seem as if it was expressly set down by Providence to afford a contrast to that bloody convulsion, and deprive the partitioning powers of a shadow even of justice in the mournful catastrophe which followed. "In contemplating that change," says Mr Burke, "humanity has every thing to rejoice and glory, in nothing to be ashamed of, nothing to suffer. So far as it has gone, it is probably the most pure public good ever yet conferred on mankind. Anarchy and servitude were at once removed; a throne strengthened for the protection of the people, without trenching on their liberties; foreign cabal abolished, by changing the crown from elective to hereditary; a reigning king, from an heroic love to his country, exerted himself in favour of a family of strangers, as if it had been his own. Ten millions of men were placed in a way to be freed gradually, and therefore to themselves safely, not from civil or political chains,

which, bad as they are, only fetter the mind, but from substantial personal bondage. Inhabitants of cities, before without privileges, were placed in the consideration which belongs to that improved and connecting situation of social life. One of the most numerous, proud, and fierce bodies of nobility in the world, was arranged only in the foremost rank of free citizens. All from the king to the labourer were improved in their condition; every thing was kept in its place and order, but in that place and order every thing was bettered. Not one drop of blood was spilled, no treachery, no outrage; no slander more cruel than the sword; no studied insults on religion, morals, or manners; no spoil or confiscation, no citizen beggared, none imprisoned, none exiled; but the whole was effected with a policy, a discretion, an unanimity and secrecy, such as have never before been known on any occasion."[1]

[1] Burke, Appeal to Old Whigs, Works, vi. 244, 245.

But it was too late. The powers which environed Poland were too strong, the weakness entailed on it by its long anarchy too great, to admit of its being restored to the rank of an independent power. Like many men who discover the error of their ways when on the verge of the grave, they had continued the passions of their youth down to the period when amendment is fruitless and repentance too late. Had they abandoned their democratic contentions in the days of Sobieski, the state might have recovered its ascendency; in the days of Catherine, it was no longer practicable.[2]

[2] Salv. iii. 501.

The last struggles of the Poles, like all their preceding ones, originated in their own divisions. The partisans of the ancient anarchy revolted against the new and more stable constitution which they had recently received; they took up arms at Targowice,

Commencement of their last Struggle.

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and invoked the aid of the Empress to restore the disorder from which she had gained so much. A second dismemberment speedily took place, and in the disordered state of the country, it was effected without opposition. Prussia and Russia took upon themselves alone the execution of this partition, and the combined troops were in the first instance quietly cantoned in the provinces which they had seized. The Russian General Igelstroem was stationed at Warsaw, and occupied all the inconsiderable portion of the Republic still left to Stanislaus. Soltikoff had under his orders a powerful corps in Wolhinia and Podolia. Suwarrow, with a considerable corps, was placed at Cherson, to overawe both the Turks and the southern provinces, while a large Prussian corps was ready to support Igelstroem, and had already seized upon the northern parts of the country. Thus Poland, distracted and paralysed, without fortified towns, mountains, or defencible positions, was overrun by the armies of two of the most powerful military monarchies in Europe.[1]

October 14, 1793.

[1] Jom. vi. 257, 258. Salv. iii. 501.

Poles take up arms from despair, and elect Kosciusko as a Leader.

There is a certain degree of calamity which overwhelms the courage; but there is another, which, by reducing men to desperation, leads to the greatest and most glorious enterprises. To this latter state the Poles were now reduced. Abandoned by all the world, distracted with internal divisions, destitute alike of fortresses and resources, crushed in the grasp of gigantic enemies, the patriots of that unhappy country, consulting only their own courage, resolved to make a last effort to deliver it from its enemies. In the midst of their internal distractions, and through all the prostration of their national strength, the Poles had never lost their individual courage, or the ennobling feelings of civil independence. They were still the redoubtable hussars who broke the Mussulman ranks under the walls of Vienna, and carried the Polish

eagles in triumph to the towers of the Kremlin, whose national cry had so often made the Osmanlis tremble, and who had boasted, in their hours of triumph, that if the heaven itself were to fall, they would support it on the point of their lances. A band of patriots at Warsaw resolved at all hazards to attempt the restoration of their independence, and they made choice of KOSCIUSKO, who was then at Leipsic, to direct their efforts.[1]

[1] Salv. iii. 92. Jom. vi. 260.

This illustrious hero, who had received the rudiments of military education in France, had afterwards served, not without glory, in the ranks of independence in America. Uniting to Polish enthusiasm French ability, the ardent friend of liberty, and the enlightened advocate for order, brave, loyal, and generous, he was in every way qualified to head the last struggle of the oldest republic in existence for its national independence. But a nearer approach to the scene of danger convinced him that the hour for action had not yet arrived. The passions, indeed, were awakened, the national enthusiasm was full, but the means of resistance were inconsiderable, and the old divisions of the republic were not so healed as to afford the prospect of the whole national strength being exerted in its defence. But the public indignation could brook no delay; several regiments stationed at Pultusk revolted, and moved towards Gallicia; and Kosciusko, determined not to be absent in the hour of danger, hastened to Cracow, where, on the 3d March, he closed the gates, and proclaimed the insurrection.[2]

[2] Jom. vi. 263. Toul. v. 88.

He Defeats the Russians at Raslowice.

Having, by means of the regiments which had revolted, and the junction of some bodies of armed peasants, imperfectly armed indeed, but full of enthusiasm, collected a force of five thousand men, Kosciusko left Cracow, and boldly advanced into the open

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country. He encountered a body of three thousand Russians at Raslowice, and after an obstinate engagement, succeeded in routing it with great slaughter. This action, inconsiderable in itself, had important consequences; the Polish peasants exchanged their scythes for the arms found on the field of battle, and the insurrection, encouraged by this first gleam of success, soon communicated itself to the adjoining provinces. In vain Stanislaus disavowed the acts of his subjects; the flame of independence spread with the rapidity of lightning, and soon all the freemen in Poland were in arms.[1]

April 8, 1794.

1 Jom. vi. 264, 265. Lac. xii. 269.

Warsaw was the first point where the flame broke out. The intelligence of the success at Raslowice was received there on the 12th April, and occasioned the most violent agitation. For some days afterwards it was evident that an explosion was at hand; and at length, at daybreak, on the morning of the 17th, the brigade of Polish guards, under the direction of their officers, attacked the Governor's house and the Arsenal, and was speedily joined by the populace. The Russian and Prussian troops in the neighbourhood of the capital were about seven thousand men; and after a prolonged and obstinate contest in the streets for thirty-six hours, they were driven across the Vistula with the loss of above three thousand men in killed and prisoners, and the flag of independence was hoisted on the towers of Warsaw.[2]

Warsaw is taken by the Insurgents.

April 17.

2 Jom. vi. 266, 269. Lac. xii. 271. Hard. i. 472.

One of the most embarrassing circumstances in the situation of the Russians was the presence of above sixteen thousand Poles in their ranks, who were known to sympathize strongly with these heroic efforts of their fellow-citizens. Orders were immediately despatched to Suwarrow, to assemble a corps, and disarm the Polish troops scattered in Podolia, before they

Poles in the Russian Army disarmed.

could unite in any common measures for their defence. By the energy and rapidity of this great commander, the Poles were disarmed brigade after brigade, and above twelve thousand men reduced to a state of inaction without much difficulty—a most important operation, not only by destroying the nucleus of a powerful army, but stifling the commencement of the insurrection in Wolhinia and Podolia. How different might have been the fate of Poland and Europe had they been enabled to join the ranks of their countrymen![1]

[1] Jom. vi. 271.

Great exertions of Kosciusko, and his Countrymen.

Kosciusko and his countrymen did every thing that courage or energy could suggest to put on foot a formidable force to resist their adversaries; a provisional government was established, and in a short time forty thousand men were raised. But this force, though highly honourable to the patriotism of the Poles, was inconsiderable when compared with the vast armies which Russia and Prussia could advance for their subjugation. Small as the army was, its maintenance was too great an effort for the resources of the kingdom, which, torn by intestine faction, without commerce, harbours, or manufactures, having no national credit, and no industrious class of citizens but the Jews, now felt the fatal effects of its long career of anarchy. The population of the country, composed entirely of unruly gentlemen, and ignorant serfs, was totally unable at that time to furnish those numerous supplies of intelligent officers which are requisite for the formation of an efficient military force; while the nobility, however formidable on horseback in the Hungarian or Turkish wars, were less to be relied on, in a contest with regular forces, where infantry and artillery constituted the great strength of the army, and courage was unavailing without the aid of science.[2]

[2] Jom. vi. 273.

The central position of Poland, in the midst of its

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enemies, would have afforded great military advantages, had they possessed a force capable of turning it to account; that is, if they had had 150,000 regular troops, which the population of the country could easily have maintained, and a few well-fortified towns to arrest the enemy in one quarter, while the bulk of the national force was precipitated upon them in another. The glorious stand made by the nation in 1831, with only thirty thousand regular troops at the commencement of the insurrection, and no other fortifications than those of Warsaw and Modlin, proves what immense advantages this central position affords; and what opportunities it offers to military genius like that of SKRYNECKI, to inflict the most severe wounds even on a superior and well-conducted antagonist. But all these advantages were awanting to Kosciusko; and it augments our admiration of his talent, and of the heroism of his countrymen, that, with such inconsiderable means, they made so honourable a stand for their national independence.

Want of a large Regular Force proved fatal to him.

No sooner was the King of Prussia informed of the Revolution at Warsaw, than he moved forward at the head of thirty thousand men to besiege that city; while Suwarrow, with forty thousand veterans, was preparing to enter the south-eastern parts of the kingdom. Aware of the necessity of striking a blow before the enemy's forces were united, Kosciusko advanced with twelve thousand men to attack the Russian General Denisoff; but, upon approaching his corps, he discovered that it had united to the army commanded by the King in person. Unable to face such superior forces, he immediately retired, but was attacked next morning at daybreak near Sckoczyre, by the Allies, and after a gallant resistance, his army was routed, and Cracow fell into the hands of the conque-

Russians and Prussians move against Warsaw.

rors. This check was the more severely felt, as about the same time General Zayonschuk was defeated at Chelne, and obliged to recross the Vistula, leaving the whole country on the right bank of that river in the hands of the Russians.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 274, 276. Lac. xii. 272.

These disasters produced a great impression at Warsaw; the people as usual ascribed them to treachery, and insisted that the leaders should be brought to punishment; and although the chiefs escaped, several persons in an inferior situation were arrested and thrown into prison. Apprehensive of some subterfuge, if the accused were regularly brought to trial, the people assembled in tumultuous bodies, forced the prisons, erected scaffolds in the streets, and, after the manner of the assassins of September 2, put above twelve persons to death with their own hands. These excesses penetrated with the most profound grief the pure heart of Kosciusko; he flew to the capital, restored order, and delivered over to punishment the authors of the revolt. But the resources of the country were evidently unequal to the struggle; the paper money was at a frightful discount; and the sacrifices required of the nation were the more severely felt, that now hardly a hope of ultimate success remained.[2]

[2] Lac. xii. 272. Jom. vi. 279.

The combined Russian and Prussian armies, about thirty-five thousand strong, now advanced against the capital, where Kosciusko occupied an intrenched camp, with twenty-five thousand men. During the whole of July and August, the besiegers were engaged in fruitless attempts to drive the Poles into the City; and at length a great convoy, with artillery and stores for a regular siege, which was ascending the Vistula, having been captured by a gentleman named Minewsky, at the head of a body of peasants, the King of Prussia raised the siege, leaving a portion of his sick and stores in the hands of the patriots.[3]

But are compelled to raise the Siege.

[3] Hard. i. 474, 480. Toul. v. 89. Jom. vi. 280, 281.

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1794. After this success, the Poles mustered nearly eighty thousand men under arms; but they were scattered over too extensive a line of country, in order to make head against their numerous enemies; a policy tempting by the prospect it holds forth of exciting an extensive insurrection, but ruinous in the end, by exposing the patriotic forces to the risk of being beaten in detail. Scarcely had the Poles recovered from their intoxication at the raising the siege of Warsaw, when intelligence was received of the defeat of Sizakowsky,

Sept. 17. who commanded a corps of ten thousand men beyond the Bug, by the Russian grand army under Suwarrow. This celebrated General, to whom the principal conduct of the war was now committed, followed up his successes with the utmost vigour. The retreating

Sept. 19. column was again assailed on the 19th by the victorious Russians, and, after a glorious resistance, driven into the woods between Janow and Biala, with the loss of four thousand men and twenty-eight pieces of cannon. Scarce three thousand Poles, with Sizakowsky at their head, escaped into Siedlce.[1]

Suwarrow defeats one of their Corps.

1 Jom. vi. 283, 287.

Upon receiving the accounts of this disaster, Kosciusko resolved, by drawing together all his detachments, to fall upon Fersen before he joined Suwarrow, and the other corps which were advancing against the capital. With this view he ordered General Poninsky to join him, and marched with all his disposable forces to attack the Russian General, who was stationed at Maccowice; but fortune on this occasion cruelly deceived the Poles. Arrived in presence of Fersen, he found that Poninsky had not yet arrived; and the Russian commander, overjoyed at this circumstance, resolved immediately to attack him. In vain Kosciusko despatched courier after courier to Poninsky to advance to his relief. The first was intercepted by the Cossacks, and the second did not arrive in

Kosciusko is routed and made Prisoner at Maccowice.

time to enable him to take a decisive part in the approaching combat. Nevertheless, the Polish commander, aware of the danger of retreating with inexperienced troops in presence of a disciplined and superior enemy, determined to give battle on the following day, and drew up his little army with as much skill as the circumstances would admit.[1]

[1] Jom. vi. 290.

The forces on the opposite sides, in this action, which decided the fate of Poland, were nearly equal in point of numbers; but the advantages of discipline and equipment were decisively on the side of the Russians. Kosciusko commanded about ten thousand men, a great part of whom were recently raised, and imperfectly disciplined; while Fersen was at the head of twelve thousand veterans, including a most formidable body of cavalry. Nevertheless the Poles, in the centre and right wing, made a glorious defence; but the left, which Poninsky should have supported, having been overwhelmed by the cavalry under Denisoff, the whole army was thrown into confusion. Kosciusko, Sizakowsky, and other gallant chiefs, in vain made the most heroic efforts to rally the broken troops. They were wounded, struck down, and made prisoners by the Cossacks, who inundated the field of battle, while the remains of the army, now reduced to seven thousand five hundred men, fell back in confusion towards Warsaw.[2]

Oct. 4, 1794.

[2] Toul. v. 89. Lac xii. 274. Jom. vi. 291.

After the fall of Kosciusko, who sustained in his single person the fortunes of the republic, nothing but a series of disasters awaited the Poles. The Austrians, taking advantage of the general confusion, entered Gallicia, and occupied the palatinates of Lublin and Landomir; while Suwarrow, pressing forward towards the capital, defeated Mokronowsky, who, at the head of twelve thousand men, strove to retard the ad-

Patriots shut themselves up in Warsaw.

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vance of that redoubtable commander. In vain the Poles made the utmost efforts; they were routed with the loss of four thousand men; and the patriots, though now despairing of success, resolved to sell their lives dearly, and shut themselves up in Warsaw, to await the approach of the conqueror.[1]

1 Jom vi. 292, 295. Toul. v. 89.

Suwarrow was soon at the gates of Praga, where twenty-six thousand men, and one hundred pieces of cannon, defended the bridge of the Vistula, and the approach to the capital. To assault such a position with forces hardly superior, was evidently a hazardous enterprise; but the approach of winter rendering it indispensable that if any thing was done at all, it should be immediately attempted, Suwarrow, who was habituated to successful assaults in the Turkish wars, resolved to storm the city. On the 2d November, the Russians made their appearance before the glacis of Praga, and Suwarrow, having, in great haste, completed three powerful batteries, and battered the defences in breach with an imposing celerity, made his dispositions for a general assault on the following day. The conquerors of Ismail advanced to the attack in the same order which they had adopted on that memorable occasion. Seven columns at daybreak approached the ramparts, rapidly filled up the ditches with their fascines, broke down the defences, and pouring into the intrenched camp, carried destruction into the ranks of the Poles. In vain the defenders did their utmost to resist the torrent. The wooden houses of Praga speedily took fire, and, amidst the shouts of the victors and the cries of the inhabitants, the Polish battalions were borne backward to the edge of the Vistula. The multitude of fugitives speedily broke down the bridges; and the citizens of Warsaw beheld, with unavailing anguish, their defenders on

Storming of Praga and Warsaw by Suwarrow.

Nov. 4.

Atrocious Massacre by the Russians.

the other side perishing in the flames, or by the sword of the conquerors. Ten thousand soldiers fell on the spot, nine thousand were made prisoners, and above twelve thousand citizens, of every age and sex, were put to the sword,—a dreadful instance of carnage, which has left a lasting stain on the name of Suwarrow, and which Russia expiated in the conflagration of Moscow.[1]

[1] Toul. v. 89, 90. Lac. xii. 275. Jom. vi. 297, 298.

The tragedy was at an end; Warsaw capitulated two days afterwards; the detached parties of the patriots melted away, and Poland was no more. On the 6th November, Suwarrow made his triumphant entry into the blood-stained capital. King Stanislaus was sent into Russia, where he ended his days in captivity, and the final partition of the monarchy was effected.[2]

[2] Jom. vi. 299. Toul. v. 91.

Great sensation produced by the Fall of Warsaw in Europe.

Such was the termination of the oldest republic in existence,—such the first instance of the destruction of a member of the European family by its ambitious rivals. As such it excited a profound sensation in Europe; the folly of preceding ages, the irretrievable defects of the Polish constitution, were forgotten; they were remembered only as the bulwark of Christendom against the Ottomans; they appeared only as the succouring angel under John Sobieski. To behold a people so ancient, so gallant, whose deeds were associated with such heart-stirring recollections, fall a victim to imperial ingratitude and Moscovite ambition, was a spectacle which naturally excited the utmost indignation. The bloody march of the French Revolution, the disasters consequent on domestic dissension, were forgotten, and the Christian world was penetrated with a grief akin to that felt by all civilized nations at the fall of Jerusalem.

The poet has celebrated these events in the immortal lines,—

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"Oh! bloodiest picture in the book of Time:
Sarmatia fell unwept, without a crime;
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,
Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe!
Dropped from her nerveless grasp the shattered spear,
Closed her bright eye, and curb'd her high career:
Hope for a season bade the world farewell,
And Freedom shrieked as Kosciusko fell!"

It was the Victim of Democratic Madness & Oppression.

But the truth of history must dispel the illusion, and unfold in the fall of Poland the natural consequence of its national delinquencies. Sarmatia neither fell unwept, nor without a crime; she fell the victim of her own dissensions; of the chimera of equality insanely pursued, and the rigour of aristocracy unceasingly maintained; of extravagant jealousy of every superior, and merciless oppression of every inferior rank. The eldest born of the European family was the first to perish, because she had thwarted all the ends of the social union; because she united the turbulence of democratic to the exclusion of aristocratic societies; because she had the vacillation of a republic without its energy, and the oppression of a monarchy without its stability. Such a system neither could nor ought to be maintained. The internal feuds of Poland were more fatal to human happiness than the despotism of Russia, and the growth of improvement among its people as slow as among the ryots of Hindostan.

Striking contrast afforded by the steady growth of Russia.

In this respect the history of Muscovy affords a striking and instructive contrast to the Polish annals. Commencing originally with a smaller territory, yet farther removed from the light of civilisation, cut off in a manner from the intelligence of the globe, decidedly inferior in its earlier contests, the growth of Russia has been as steady as the decline of Poland. The Polish republic fell at length beneath a power

whom it had repeatedly vanquished; and its name was erased from the list of nations at the very time that its despotic rival had attained the zenith of power and glory. These facts throw a great and important light on the causes of early civilisation, and the form of government adapted to a barbarous age. There cannot in such a state be so great a misfortune as a weak, there cannot be so great a blessing as a powerful government. No oppression is so severe as that which is there inflicted by the members of the same state on each other; no anarchy so irremediable as that which arises from the violence of their own passions. To restrain the fury, and coerce the dissensions of its subjects, is the first duty of government in such periods; in its inability to discharge this duty, is to be found the real cause of the weakness of a democratic, in the rude but effective performance of it the true secret of the strength of a despotic state.

Gallant Spirit of the exiled Polish Bands.

Such are the ennobling effects of the spirit of freedom even in its wildest fits, that the remnant of the Polish nation, albeit bereft of a country by their own insanity, have by their deeds commanded the respect, and by their sorrows obtained the sympathy of the world. The remains of Kosciusko's bands, disdaining to live under Muscovite oppression, have sought and found an asylum in the armies of France; they served with distinction both in Italy and Spain, and awakened by their bravery that sympathy, which brought the Conqueror of Europe to the walls of the Kremlin. Like the remains of a noble mind borne down by suffering, they have exhibited flashes of greatness even in the extremity of disaster; and while wandering without a home, from which their madness had banished them, obtained a respect, to which their conquerors were strangers at the summit of their glory.

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Such is the effect even of the misdirected spirit of freedom; it dignifies and hallows all that it encircles, and, even amidst the ruins which it has occasioned, exalts the human soul!

Comparison of Polish with English History.

The history of England has illustrated the beneficial effects which have resulted to its character and institutions from the Norman Conquest. In the severe suffering which followed that great event; in the anguish of generations, were laid the deep and lasting foundations of English freedom. In the checkered and disastrous history of Poland, may be traced the consequences of an opposite, and, at first sight, more fortunate destiny; of national independence uninterruptedly maintained, and purity of race unceasingly preserved. The first, in the school of early adversity, were taught the habits and learned the wisdom necessary for the guidance of maturer years; the second, like the spoiled child, whose wishes had never been coerced, nor passions restrained, at last acquired, on the brink of the grave, prematurely induced by excessive indulgence, that experience which should have been gained in earlier years. It is through this terrible, but necessary ordeal, that Poland is now passing; and the experience of ages would indeed be lost, if we did not discern in their present suffering the discipline necessary for future happiness, and in the extremity of temporary disaster, the severe school of ultimate improvement.

'The partition of Poland, and scandalous conduct of the states who reaped the fruit of injustice in its fall, has been the frequent subject of just indignation, and eloquent complaint from the European historians; but the connection between that calamitous event and the subsequent disasters of the partitioning powers, has not hitherto met with due attention. Yet nothing can be clearer, than that it was this iniquitous mea-

sure which brought all the misfortunes which followed upon the European monarchies; that it was it which opened the gates of Germany to French ambition, and brought Napoleon with his terrible legions to Vienna, Berlin, and the Kremlin. The more the campaigns of 1793 and 1794 are studied, the more clearly does it appear that it was the prospect of obtaining a share in the partition of Poland which paralysed the Allied arms, which intercepted and turned aside the legions which might have overthrown the Jacobin rule, and created that jealousy and division amongst their rulers, which more even than the energy of the Republicans, contributed to their uniform and astonishing success. Had the redoubtable bands of Catherine been added to the armies of Prussia in the plains of Champaigne in 1792, or to those of Austria and England in the field of Flanders in 1793, not a doubt can remain that the revolutionary party would have been overcome, and a constitutional monarchy established in France, with the entire concurrence of three-fourths of all the respectable classes in the kingdom. Even in 1794, by a cordial co-operation of the Prussian and Austrian forces after the fall of Landrecy, the whole barrier erected by the genius of Vauban might have been captured, and the Revolution, thrown back upon its own resources, been permanently prevented from proving dangerous to the liberties of Europe. What then paralysed the Allied armies in the midst of such a career of success, and caused the campaign to close under circumstances of such general disaster? The partition of Poland, which first retained the Prussian battalions during the crisis of the campaign in sullen inactivity on the Rhine, and then led to the precipitate and indignant abandonment of Flanders by the Austrian forces.

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Subsequent Punishment of the Partitioning Powers.

The subsequent fate of the partitioning powers is a striking instance of that moral retribution, which, sooner or later, in nations as well as individuals, attends a flagrant act of injustice. To effect the destruction of Poland, Prussia paralysed her armies on the Rhine, and threw on Austria and England the whole weight of the contest with Republican France. She thereby permitted the growth of its military power, and the battle of Jena, the Treaty of Tilsit, and six years of bondage, were the consequence. Suwarrow entered Warsaw when its spires were yet gleaming with the fires of Praga, and when the Vistula ran red with Polish blood, and before twenty years had expired, a Polish army revenged on the Moskwa that inhuman massacre, and the sack of Warsaw was forgotten in the conflagration of Moscow. Austria withdrew from Flanders to join in the deed of iniquity, and secure in Gallicia the fruits of injustice; and twice did the French guards in consequence pass in triumph through the walls of Vienna.

It was this scandalous spoliation, therefore, which opened the gates of Europe to French ambition; and when we recollect what unheard of disasters they brought on all the partitioning powers, and most of all on Prussia, which first gave the example of this interested defection from the cause of general freedom, it is impossible not to perceive the silent but irresistible operation of the moral laws to which the conduct of nations is subjected, or to perceive in the unexampled calamities, which for twenty years afterwards desolated Europe, any thing but the natural consequence and just punishment of the greatest political crime which had been committed since the ambition of the Romans subjugated mankind.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1795.

ARGUMENT.

Effects of the Successes of France in the preceding Campaign—Peace with Prussia—State of the Empire—Treaty of Alliance, Offensive and Defensive, between Holland and France—Fresh Treaty between Austria and England—Efforts of England to maintain the War—Her Land and Sea Forces, and Supplies—Treaty with Russia—Arguments in England against and for the War—Great increase in the Patriotic Spirit of the People—Exhausted State of France—Naval Operations in the Mediterranean—Combat of La Spezia—War in the Maritime Alps—Allies at first successful—Difficult Situation of the French—Their Armies, strongly reinforced, resume the Offensive—Battle of Loano—Its decisive consequences—Tactics by which it was gained by the Republicans—War in Spain—Indecisive Operations in Catalonia—Great successes of the Republicans in Biscay—Peace between France and Spain—Pacification of La Vendée—Treaty with the Insurgents—Expedition to Quiberon—Running Sea-Fight at Bellisle—Landing of the Emigrants in Quiberon Bay—Vigorous defensive Measures of Hoche—The Invaders are blockaded—Their desperate situation—Unfortunate Attempts at succour by the Chouan Chiefs—They are Repulsed—Storming of the Royalist Intrenchments—They are driven into the Sea, or Capitulate—Atrocious Cruelty of the Republicans—Noble Conduct and Death of the Royalist Prisoners—Rapid decline of the Royalist Cause in the West of France—War on the Rhine—Extreme Penury and Difficulties of the Republicans on the Rhine—State of the contending Armies—Early Inactivity of the Allies—Fall of Luxembourg—Secret Negotiations between Pichegru and the Allies—Inactivity of the Austrians on the Upper Rhine—Republicans cross that River—Defensive Dispositions of the Austrians—Able and Vigorous Measures of Clairfait—He attacks the Lines round Mayence—Other Operations along the River—Republicans are driven from before Manheim—Which Capitulates—Wurmser drives Pichegru to the Lines of the Queich—Maritime Operations—Results of the Campaign—Declining Affairs, and exhausted State of the Republicans—Feeble Character of the War up to this Period—Great Results which might have followed a vigorous exertion of the Allied Strength, from the Lassitude of the French.

THE great successes which in every quarter had signalized the conclusion of the campaign of 1794, led early in the following year to the dissolution of

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the Confederacy against the French Republic. The conquest of Holland determined the wavering policy of Prussia. Early in January, conferences were publicly opened at Bâle, and before the end of the month the plenipotentiaries were signed. The public articles of this treaty bound the King of Prussia to live on friendly terms with the Republic, and not furnish succour to its enemies,—to leave to France the undisturbed enjoyment of its conquests on the left bank of the Rhine, leaving the equivalent to be given to Prussia to ulterior arrangement; while, on the other hand, the French government engaged to withdraw its troops from the Prussian possessions on the right bank, and not treat as enemies the states of the empire in which Prussia took an interest.[1]

Jan. 22, 1795.

[1] Hard. iii. 144.

By the secret articles, "the King of Prussia engaged not to undertake any hostile enterprise against Holland, or any country occupied by the French troops;" an indemnity was stipulated for Prussia, in the event of France extending her frontiers to the Rhine: the Republic engaged not to carry hostilities in the empire beyond a fixed line, and in case of the Rhine being permanently fixed on as the boundary of France, and including the states of Deux Ponts, the Republic engaged to undertake a debt of 1,500,000 rix-dollars, due to Prussia by that potentate.[2]

[2] Hard. iii. 144–146.

There was in truth no present interest at variance between these powers, and the treaty contained little more of importance than a recognition of the Republic by Frederick William; but there never was a more ultimately ruinous step taken by a nation. The conquest of Holland, which overturned the balance of power, and exposed Prussia uncovered to the attacks of France, should have been the signal for a sincere coalition, such as that which had coerced the ambition

Effects of the Successes of France in preceding Campaign. Peace with Prussia.

of Louis XIV., and subsequently overturned the power of Napoleon. What a succession of disasters would such a decided conduct in all probability have prevented; what long and disastrous wars; what a prodigious effusion of human blood; what unheard-of efforts did it require for Prussia to regain in 1813 the position which she occupied in 1795. But these events were buried in the womb of Fate; no one then anticipated the coming disasters; and the Prussian ministers deemed themselves fortunate in escaping from a war, in which the real interest of the monarchy seemed to be at stake. They concluded peace accordingly; they left Austria to contend single-handed with the power of France; and the battle of Jena, and Treaty of Tilsit, were the consequence.[1]*

[1] Jom. vii. 6. Th. vii. 202.

* The British historian need not hesitate to express this opinion, since it is not only agreeable to that of all the German annalists, but expressly admitted by the able and candid Prussian statesman, who concluded with Barthelemy, on the part of the Directory, that unhappy pacification. "The King of Prussia," says Prince Hardenberg, "tired of warlike operations, rudely awakened from his dreams on the plains of Champaigne, and deeming a counter revolution in France impossible, said to his ministers: 'Arrange matters as you like, provided you extricate me from the war with France.' By signing the treaty of Bâle, he abandoned the House of Orange, sacrificed Holland, laid open the empire to French invasion, and prepared the ruin of the ancient Germanic constitution. Despising the lessons of history, that Prince forgot that no sooner was the independence of Holland menaced, in the end of the seventeenth century, than a league of all the sovereigns of Europe was formed to restrain the ambition of Louis XIV.; while at this time, the invasion of the same country, effected under the Republican banners, led to a dissolution of the coalition of Kings against the French Revolution. From that moment every throne was stript of the magic halo which heretofore had surrounded it. Accident merely prevented the treaty of Bâle from being followed by a general Revolution in Europe.

"Had Frederick William been animated with the spirit of Frederick the Great, he would have negociated with the olive branch in one hand, and the sword in the other, and supporting Holland, he would even have included it in the line of his military protection. By so doing, he would have risen to the rank not only of the mediator, but

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The disunited and unwieldy mass of the empire, without altogether discontinuing military operations, pursued them in so languid a manner as to be equivalent to a complete pacification. Bavaria, the Elector of Mayence, and several other powers, issued a declaration, that the States of the Empire had not taken up arms but for the protection of the states adjoining Alsace, and that they had no inclination to interfere in the internal affairs of France. Spain, exhausted and dejected, awaited only the most favourable opportunity of making a separate peace, and concluding a contest from which she had already suffered so much; while Piedmont, crushed by the weight of armaments beyond its strength, which cost more than three times the subsidies granted by England, equally desired a conclusion to hostilities without venturing to express the wish. The conquest of Holland relieved the French government of all anxiety in that quarter, by compelling the Dutch to conclude an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Republic. The principal conditions of that treaty were, that the United Provinces ceded Venloo and Maestricht to Belgium; and bound themselves to aid the French with twelve ships of the line, and eighteen frigates, and one-half of the troops which they had under arms.[1]

State of the Empire. Oct. 1794. Dec. 25, 1794.

Treaty between Holland and France.

[1] Jom vii. 8, 16, 18. Th. vii. 203.

Thus the whole weight of the war fell on Austria

the arbiter of Europe, and been enabled to aspire to the glorious mission of balancing the dominion of the seas, against continental despotism. Whereas, the peace of Bâle, concluded on narrow views, and without any regard to the common cause, destroyed the personal character of Frederick William, and stript the Prussian monarchy of its glorious reputation. We may add, that if, ten years afterwards, Prussia was precipitated into the abyss, it is to be imputed to its blind and obstinate adherence to the system of neutrality, which commenced with the treaty of Bâle. No one felt this more deeply, or expressed it more loudly, than the Prussian diplomatist who concluded that pacification."—Prince Hardenberg's Memoirs, iii. 150, 151.

and England. The former of these powers had suffered too much by the loss of the Low Countries to permit her to think of peace, while the disasters she had experienced had not as yet been so great as to compel her to renounce the hope of regaining them.

Fresh Treaty between Austria and England.

Mr Pitt, however, was indefatigable in his efforts to revive the confederacy: and he met with a worthy ally in Thugut, who directed the Cabinet of Vienna. On the 4th May 1795, a treaty, offensive and defensive, was concluded between the two powers, by which Austria engaged to maintain 200,000 men in the field during the approaching campaign, and England to furnish a subsidy of L. 6,000,000 sterling. The utmost efforts were at the same time made to reinforce the Imperial armies on the Rhine.[1]

4th and 20th May, 1795.

[1] Jom. vii. 15, 16. Parl. Hist. xxxii. 576.

England made exertions for the prosecution of the war, more considerable than she had yet put forth, and seemed sensible that the national strength required to be more fully exerted now that the war approached her own shores. Her naval force was augmented to 100,000 seamen, and one hundred and eight ships of the line put in commission, and the land forces raised to 150,000 men. The expenditure of the year, exclusive of the interest of the national debt, amounted to L. 27,500,000, of which L. 18,000,000 was raised by loan, and L. 3,500,000 by exchequer bills. To such an immense extent, thus early in the contest, was the ruinous system of providing for the expenses of the year by borrowing, adopted by the British government. New taxes to the amount of L. 1,600,000 were imposed, and notwithstanding the most vehement debates on the conduct of Administration, and the original expedience of the war, all parties in Parliament concurred in the necessity, now that we were embarked in the contest, of prosecuting it with vigour.[2]

Efforts of England to maintain the War.

Land and Sea Forces, and Supplies.

[2] New Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 31, 33, 45, 49.

On the 18th February, an alliance, offensive and

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defensive, was concluded between Great Britain, Austria, and Russia. This important event, the first step towards the great and decisive share which that power ultimately took in the contest, was not, however, at first productive of any results. The Empress Catherine, whose attention was wholly engrossed in securing the immense territories which had fallen to her by the partition of Poland, merely sent a fleet of twelve ships of the line, and eight frigates, to reinforce Admiral Duncan, who was cruizing in the North Seas, to blockade the squadron recently acquired by France from the Dutch Republic; but neither had any opportunity to measure their strength with the enemy.[1]

Treaty with Russia.

[1] Jom. vii. 11, 17.

A powerful and energetic party in England still declaimed against the war as unjust and unnecessary, and viewed with secret complacency the triumphs of the Republican forces. It was urged in Parliament, that the revolutionary government in France being now overturned, and one professing moderation installed in its stead, the great object of the war was in fact at an end: that the continued disasters of the Allies proved the impossibility of forcing a government on France contrary to the inclination of its inhabitants: that the Confederacy was now in fact dissolved, and the first opportunity should therefore be seized to conclude a contest from which no rational hopes of success any longer remained: that if we continued fighting till the Bourbons were restored, it was impossible to see any end to the contest, or to the burden which would be imposed upon England during its continuance: that nothing but disaster had hitherto been experienced in the struggle; and if that was the case formerly, when all Europe was arrayed against the Republic, what might be now expected when England and Austria alone were left to continue the struggle,[2] and the French power extended from the Pyrenees to

Arguments in England against War.

[2] Mr Fox and Wilberforce's Speech. New Ann. Reg. 1795, 13, 14. Parl. Debates, xxxii. 231, 242.

the Texel? that every consideration of safety and expedience, therefore, recommended the speedy close of a contest, of doubtful policy in its commencement, and more than doubtful justice in its principles.

Mr Pitt's Reply.

Mr Pitt replied, that the object of the war was not to force the people of France to adopt any particular form of government, but merely to secure their neighbours from their aggression; and that, although he much feared that no security could be found for this, till a monarchy was restored in that country, yet that it was no part of the Allied policy to compel its adoption: that the government of the French Republic was changed in form only, and not in spirit, and was as formidable as when the war was first provoked by the declamations of the Girondists: that hostilities would again be commenced as soon as the military power of their enemies was dissolved, and that the Allies would then find it as difficult a matter to reassemble their forces, as the French would now find it to dissolve theirs: that it was highly improbable that the Republican government would be able to induce men accustomed to war and rapine, to return to the peaceful occupations of life; and much more likely that they would find it necessary to employ them in schemes of ambition and plunder, to prevent them from turning their arms against domestic authority: that war, however costly, at least gave to England security, and it would be highly impolitic to exchange this for the peril necessarily consequent upon a resumption of amicable relations with a country in such a state of political contagion: that peace would at once prove destructive to the French West India islands, by delivering them over to anarchy and Jacobinism, and from them the flame of servile revolt would speedily spread to our own colonial possessions in that

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quarter: that, notwithstanding the great successes of the French on the continent, the balance of conquest in the contest with England, was decidedly in favour of this country: that the losses of the Republicans in wealth and resources had been greater since the beginning of the war, than those of all the Allies put together: that the forced requisitions and assignats of the French, which had hitherto maintained the contest, could not be continued without the severities of the Reign of Terror; and that now was the time, by vigorously continuing the contest, to compel the Directory to augment their redundant paper currency; and thus accelerate the ruin which it was evident such a system must sooner or later bring on the financial resources of the country.[1]

[1] New Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 16, 17. Parl. Debates, xxxii. 242, 251.

Great increase in the Patriotic Spirit of the People.

The internal feeling of England, notwithstanding the continued ill success of its arms, was daily becoming more unanimous in favour of the war. The atrocities of the Jacobins had moderated the ardour of many of the most enlightened of their early friends, and confirmed the hostility of almost all the opulent and influential classes; the spectacle of the numerous and interesting emigrant families who had been reduced from the height of prosperity to utter destitution, awakened the compassion of the humane over the whole country; while the immense successes of the Republicans, and, above all, the occupation of Holland, excited the hereditary and ill-extinguished jealousy of the English people of their ancient rivals. Although, therefore, the division of parties continued most vehement, and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act still invested the government with extraordinary powers, yet the feeling of the country was gradually becoming more united,[2] and its passions, like those of a combatant who has been wounded in the

[2] Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 34, 42.

strife, were waxing warmer with all the blood which it had lost. CHAP. XVIII.

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In France, on the other hand, the exhaustion consequent upon a state of extraordinary and unparalleled exertion was rapidly beginning to display itself. The system of the Convention had consisted in spending the capital of the country by means of confiscations, forced loans, and military requisitions; and the issue of assignats, supported by the Reign of Terror, had, beyond all former example, carried their design into effect. But all such violent means of obtaining supplies, can, in their own nature, only be temporary,—how great soever may be the accumulated wealth of a state, it must in time be exhausted, if not supplied by the continued rills of private industry. The Reign of Terror, by stopping all the efforts of individuals to better their condition, and paralysing the arms of labour over the whole country, dried up the sources of national wealth; even had the fall of Robespierre not put a period to the violent means adopted for rendering it available to the state, the same result must soon have followed from the cessation of all the sources of its supply.[1] Exhausted state of France.

[1] Mig. ii. 402. Th. vii. 433. Jom. vii. 56.

During the winter of 1794, the French government made the greatest exertions to put their navy on a respectable footing, but all their efforts on that element led to nothing but disaster. Early in March the Toulon fleet, consisting of thirteen ships of the line, put to sea with the design of expelling the English squadron from the Gulf of Genoa, and landing an expedition in Corsica. Being ignorant of their intention, Lord Hotham, who commanded the English blockading fleet, was at Leghorn at the time, and they succeeded in capturing the Berwick, of seventy-four guns, in the Gulf of St Florent, which found itself Naval operations in the Mediterranean. Combat of La Spezia.

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surrounded by the French fleet before its crew were aware it had put to sea. But the British Admiral was not long in taking his revenge. On the 7th March he set sail from Leghorn with thirteen line-of-battle

March 13.

ships, and on the 13th fell in with the French squadron of the same force. By a skilful manœuvre he succeeded in cutting off two ships of the line, the Ca Ira and the Censeur, which fell into the hands of the British; and the remainder of the fleet, after a severe but partial action, was compelled to fall back to the Isles de Hyeres, and disembark the land troops which they had on board. By this vigorous stroke the object of the expedition in the recovery of Corsica was entirely frustrated; and such was the dismay with which the soldiers were inspired from their sufferings during its continuance, that out of eighteen thousand men who were originally embarked, only ten thousand reached the French army, then lying in the Marquisate of Oneille.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 138. Jom. vii. 72, 74.

War in the Maritime Alps.

Meanwhile the courts of Vienna and of Turin were making the most vigorous efforts for the prosecution of the war on the Piedmontese frontier. The Austrians reinforced the King of Sardinia with fifteen thousand men, and the Piedmontese troops raised the effective force in the field to fifty thousand men. The French troops on the same frontier were in a still greater state of destitution and misery than the Army of the Rhine. From the effect of desertion and sickness, during the severe winter of 1794, amidst the inhospitable regions of the Alps, the total effective forces on that frontier did not exceed forty-five thousand. They occupied the whole crest of the mountains, from Vado to the Little St Bernard, while eighteen thousand of the Allied Forces were stationed in front of Cairo, fifteen thousand near Ceva, ten thousand in the

valleys of Stura and Suza, and six thousand on the lofty ridges which close the upper extremity of the valley of Aosta. Generally speaking, the Republicans were perched on the summits of the mountains, while the Piedmontese forces occupied the narrow defiles where they sunk down into the Italian plains.[1] 1 Toul. v. 293. Jom. vii. 76, 78, 80.

The campaign commenced by a well-concerted enterprise of the French on the Col Dumont, near Mont Cenis, which the Piedmontese occupied with a force of two thousand men, from whence they were driven with considerable loss. But shortly afterwards, Kellerman having been obliged to weaken his right by large detachments, to suppress a revolt at Toulon, the Imperialists resolved to take the lead by offensive operations against the French forces stationed in the Maritime Alps. For this purpose a simultaneous attack was made on the Republican posts at St Giacomo, Bardinetto, and Vado, which were all fortified. Though the French gained an advantage at the Col de Tende, their line was forced back after several days' fighting. The Republicans were obliged to evacuate all their positions in the Maritime Alps. The Allied Forces occupied Loano, Finale, and Voltri, with all the magazines and artillery which had been collected there, and threatened the country of Nice, and the territory of the Republic. Had the Allied Generals pushed their advantages with vigour, the whole right wing of the French army might have been driven from the mountains, or destroyed; for they could have collected thirty thousand fresh troops, flushed with victory, to crush twenty thousand, harassed with fatigue, destitute of shoes, and literally starving. Kellerman, with the aid of his chief of the staff, Berthier, exerted the utmost degree of skill and ability to compensate the inferiority of their force; but it was with the

May 12.

June 20.

Allies at first successful.

June 26.

Difficult situation of the French.

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greatest difficulty, and only by pledging their private credit for the supplies of the army, that they were enabled either to procure provisions for the troops, or inspire them with the resolution to defend the rugged and desolate ridge, in which the contest was carried on. Their situation was rendered the more desperate, by an unsuccessful naval action between the British and Toulon fleets in the bay of Frejus, in the course of which the Alcide, of seventy-four guns, blew up; and the French squadron, severely shattered, was compelled to take refuge in the harbour of Toulon. Fortunately for the Republicans, divisions between the Allied Generals at this time paralysed their movements, and prevented them from following up those advantages which their recent successes and the open communication with the English fleet seemed to afford.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 98, 101. Toul. v. 293, 297, 300.

These disasters on the frontiers of Provence induced the government to detach seven thousand men from the army of the Eastern Pyrenees, and ten thousand men from the army of the Rhine, to reinforce the combatants on the Alps. Their arrival, towards the end of August, restored the superiority to the Republican side, while no corresponding addition was made to the forces of the Allied Generals,—another proof, among the many which these campaigns afforded, of the total want of concert which prevailed between the Allies on the vast circle of operations from the Rhine to the Mediterranean, and the inestimable advantages which the French derived from the unity of government, and interior line of communication which they enjoyed. The consequences soon proved ruinous to the Allied Armies.[2]

French Armies strongly reinforced.

[2] Jom. vii. 280.

Resume the offensive.

Kellerman, at liberty by this powerful reinforcement to resume the offensive, and encouraged by the

evident discord between the Allied Generals, formed the design of separating the Sardinian from the Austrian forces by a concentrated attack upon the centre of their line, and compelling the latter to give battle alone in the valley of Loano. But before this plan could be carried into effect, the peace with Spain enabled the government to detach to the support of the army of Italy the army of the Eastern Pyrenees, which arrived in the Maritime Alps before the end of September, and the command of the whole given to General Scherer, Kellerman being detached to the command of the forces in Savoy. This great addition rendered the Republicans nearly double of the Allied Forces in that quarter; while the Courts of Turin and Vienna took no steps to avert the storm preparing to burst upon their heads. In truth, the Piedmontese government, experiencing the fate of all weak states in alliance with powerful ones, began to be as jealous of its friends as its enemies; while the Imperial Generals rendered it too evident, by their manner and conduct, that they had no confidence either in the sincerity of the government, or the efficiency of their soldiers. Devins trusted for his support not to the strength of the mountains which he occupied, but the co-operation of the English fleet in the bay of Genoa; a signal error, which soon led to the most disastrous consequences.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 284, 293, 294, 297. Toul. v. 301.

Battle of Loano.

The Austrian army, consisting of forty thousand men, was posted in a strong and fortified position, having its left resting on the little seaport town of Loano, and its right extending to the summit of the impending heights to the northward, from whence it communicated by a chain of fortified posts with the strong places of Ceva, Mondovi, and Coni, held by the Piedmontese troops. Their position was strong, but

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1795. it was balanced by the circumstance, that in case of disaster the left wing had no means of retreat. The Republicans occupied a position in front of their opponents, their right resting on the little village of Borghetto on the sea-coast, their left extending to the Col de Tende and the summits of the Maritime Alps. The army at first consisted only of thirty-seven thousand men, but it was raised by the successive arrival of the columns from the Eastern Pyrenees, before the middle of November, to sixty thousand men. Massena, who had acquired a remarkable knowledge of the localities of that rugged district during the preceding campaigns, and whose great military abilities had already become conspicuous, was entrusted with the command of the attack. Notwithstanding the vast accession of force which the Republicans had received, and the increased activity which they had for some time evinced, the Austrian commander was so little aware of his danger that he lay at La Pietra, detained by an abscess in his mouth, while his officers were chiefly assembled at Feriole, when they were roused from a ball by the sound of the French cannon, at six o'clock on the morning of the 23d November.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 298, 309. Toul. v. 378, 379.

Scherer, the General-in-Chief, commanded the right wing. Augereau the centre, and Serrurier the left. Massena's design was to force the Austrian centre with an overwhelming force, and from that vantage-ground to take the remainder of the line in flank and rear. After haranguing his troops, he led them to the assault. The Austrian centre, commanded by Argenteau, made an obstinate resistance at the posts of Bardinetto and Melogno; but such was the vehemence of the fresh columns which the Republicans brought up to the assault, that they were compelled at length to retire to a second line on the right bank

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of the Bormida. Massena soon forced that position also, and by so doing, got into the interior of the Austrian line, and was able to take all their positions in rear. The result of this first day's combat was, that the centre of the Allies being forced, their left wing was liable to be overwhelmed by the combined attacks of the French centre and right wing.[1]

[1] Toul. v. 379, 381. Jom. vii. 310—315.

No sooner was the Austrian General made sensible of this disaster, than he took the most precipitate steps to draw back his right wing. But he was not permitted to do this without sustaining the greatest losses. By break of day Augereau was climbing the heights of the Apennines, while his victorious battalions were driving every thing before them on their sides. In conducting their retreat, the Imperialists did not display the vigour or decision which could alone save them in such perilous circumstances, and which, on the preceding day, had extricated the division commanded by Roccavina from equal danger. The consequence was, that they were beset on all sides in a ravine, which formed their only line of retreat; the head of the column, seized with a panic, was driven back upon the centre, and thrown into utter confusion; and, in the midst of an unparalleled scene of carnage and horror, forty-eight pieces of cannon, and one hundred caissons, were abandoned. The other column of the right wing only escaped by betaking themselves to almost inaccessible paths, and abandoning all their artillery, and at length, with great difficulty, effected their retreat by the road of the Corniché. Five thousand prisoners, eighty pieces of cannon, and an immense quantity of ammunition and magazines, fell into the hands of the victors;[2] the total loss on the side of the Austrians was not less than

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[2] Jom. vii. 316—321. Toul. v. 380—383.

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seven thousand, while that of the French hardly amounted to one thousand men.

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This great victory, which terminated the campaign of 1795 in the Alps, was of decisive importance to the Republic. It gave the French winter-quarters at Loano, Savona, Vado, and other places on the Italian side of the Apennines, and by rendering them masters of the valleys of the Orba, the Bormida, and the Tanaro, afforded every facility, at the commencement of the following campaign, for achieving the great object of separating the Austrian from the Piedmontese troops. In Savoy, the early fall of the snows precluded active operations at that rigorous season; but the French continued to occupy their elevated position on the summits of the ridge of Mont Genevre, Mont Cenis, and Little St Bernard.[1]

Its decisive consequences.

[1] Jom. vii. 324.

This battle, the most decisive yet gained from the commencement of the war by the Republican forces, is well deserving of consideration. It was the first instance of the successful application by the French troops of those principles of strategy which were afterwards carried to such perfection by Napoleon. It is the first victory in which a decisive advantage was gained, where the strength of the adverse army was at once broken by the number of prisoners and artillery which were taken. The same principles which the English adopted under Rodney and Howe, that of breaking the line, and falling with an overwhelming force upon one wing, was here carried into execution with decisive effect. It is worthy of observation, that this system was thus practically accomplished, and fully understood, by Massena, before Napoleon ever had the command of an army; another proof among the many which exist, that even the greatest genius cannot by more than a few years anticipate the lights

Tactics by which it was gained by the Republicans.

of the age. Such a plan is the natural result of conscious prowess, and an experienced superiority in combat, which leads the attacking force to throw itself, without hesitation, into the midst of the enemy's columns. It will never be adopted but by the party by whom such a superiority is felt; it will never be successful, but where such a superiority exists.

War in Spain. Indecisive operations in Catalonia.

The war on the Spanish frontier, during this campaign, was speedily brought to a successful termination. In the Western Pyrenees, the Republicans, during the winter, had sustained the greatest losses from sickness; no less than twelve thousand men perished in the hospitals since the troops went into their cantonments, and twenty-five thousand were still sick; only twenty-five thousand, out of a nominal force of sixty thousand, were in a condition to take the field, and they having long been reduced to half a ration a-day, looked more like spectres than men. It was not till the beginning of June that the Republican forces were so much strengthened, by reinforcements from the interior, as to be able to take the field. The fall of Figueras and Roses gave the French a secure base for their operations in Catalonia, but the operations there, though upon the whole successful, were not of any decisive importance. The Spanish army in that quarter was stationed on the river La Fluvia. Several combats of inconsiderable importance took place, the most remarkable of which was that of Bezalu, where Augereau, with a small force, defeated all the efforts of the Spanish army. The opposing armies were still on the Fluvia, when the treaty of peace between the two powers suspended all farther hostilities.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 104, 110, 116. Toul. v. 218, 221.

It was in Biscay that the decisive action took place which hastened this important event. Twelve thou-

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sand men detached from the army of La Vendée, and replaced in that quarter by the troops who had been engaged in the reduction of Luxembourg, at length put the French commander in a condition to take the field. Towards the end of June, the campaign commenced by an unsuccessful attempt of the French upon the corps, commanded by Felangieri; but in the beginning of July, Moncey forced the passage of the river Deva, and by a vigorous attack with his centre, succeeded in dividing the Spanish army into two parts, and interposing a hostile force between them. General Crespo, who commanded the Spanish left, was so vigorously pursued by the Republicans, that he was compelled to abandon both Bilboa and Vittoria, and found himself driven to the frontiers of Old Castile, with a force reduced by the sword and desertion to seven thousand men. The left wing of the invading army was not so successful; and preparations were making for the investment of Pampeluna, when hostilities were terminated by the intelligence of the treaty of Bâle, concluded on the 12th July between the hostile powers.[1]

Great successes of the Republicans in Biscay.

June 25.

July 17.

[1] Toul. v. 220. Jom. vii. 118, 122, 125.

By this treaty Spain recognised the French Republic, and ceded to France the Spanish half of the island of St Domingo; an acquisition more embarrassing than valuable, in the state of anarchy to which the precipitate measures for the emancipation of the negroes had reduced that once flourishing colony. In return, the Republic relinquished all its conquests in Europe, and the frontiers of the two states were fixed as before the commencement of hostilities. The principal advantage gained to France by this treaty, and it proved in the end a most important one, was the command which it gave the government of two experienced and courageous armies, who were forthwith

Peace between France and Spain.

July 12, 1795.

transferred to the seat of war in the Alps, and laid the foundation of the great achievements which in the following campaign signalized the progress of the army of Italy.

Pacification of La Vendée.

During the whole winter of 1794, the unconquerable Charette maintained, with a few thousand men, the contest in La Vendée. The increase of the Republican forces, the diminution of his own followers, seemed only to augment the resources of his courage. So highly was his perseverance prized, that Suwarrow wrote with his own hand a letter expressive of his admiration; and all the Princes of Europe looked to him as the only man capable of restoring the royal cause. But after the fall of Robespierre, and the execution of Carrier, more moderate ideas began to prevail in the French government; and the Committee of Public Safety became weary of a contest apparently interminable, and which consumed in self-destruction a large portion of the forces of the Republic. At the suggestion of Carnot, they published a proclamation, couched in terms of reconciliation and amity; and this having led to an address in similar terms from the Royalist chiefs, conferences took place between the contending parties, and a treaty was concluded at La Jaunais for the final pacification of the West of France.[1]

Jan. 18, 1795.

[1] Lac. xii. 298. Jom. vii. 26.

Treaty with the insurgents.

The principal conditions of this treaty were the free and undisturbed exercise of their religion to the inhabitants of the insurgent district; the establishment of a corps of two thousand territorial guards, composed of the natives of the country, and paid by government; the immediate payment of two millions of francs for the expenses of the war; various indemnities to the greatest sufferers from its ravages; the removal of the sequestration laid on the emigrants,

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and all condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal; the tacit permission to the people to retain their arms, and an exemption from every kind of tax, levy, or requisition. On their side the Royalists engaged to submit to the laws of the Republic, and, as soon as possible, surrender their artillery. There were also secret articles, the exact nature of which has never been ascertained; but Charette and the Royalist party have always maintained, that they contained an engagement on the part of the Convention, as soon as the state of the public feeling would admit of it, to restore the monarchy. This treaty, though not at the time embraced by Stofflet and the Chouans, was shortly after acceded to by both the one and the other.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 26, 27, 29. Lac. xii. 302.

April 20, 1795.

Nine days after the signature of this treaty, Charette and his officers made a triumphal entry into Nantes, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants. Discharges of artillery announced the passage of the Loire, the scene of so many Republican murders, by the Royalist hero, who was mounted on a splendid charger, dressed in blue, with the Royalist scarf, and a plume of white feathers on his head. Four of his lieutenants rode by his side, arrayed in the same manner, which formed a painful contrast with the dress of the commissioners of the Convention, distinguished chiefly by the red cap of liberty.[2]

[2] Lac. xii. 303. Beauch. iii. 142, 143.

But after the first tumults of public joy had subsided, it became evident that the treaty was a truce rather than a final pacification, and that the seeds of inextinguishable discord subsisted between the opposite parties. The Royalists and the Republicans lived exclusively with each other: The officers of Charette appeared at the theatre with the white cockade; though he himself, who had so often rivalled Coligny in war, surpassed him in prudence and caution during

peace. Carefully avoiding every menacing or hostile expression, he was yet reserved and circumspect in his demeanour; and it was evident to all, that though anxious to avoid an immediate rupture, he had no confidence in the continuance of the accommodation. The members of the Committee of Public Safety were impressed with the same conviction. The answer they made to their friends, when pressed on the subject of the treaty, was,—"We have little reliance on the submission of Charette; but we are always gaining time, and preparing the means of crushing him on the first symptoms of a revolt."[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 304. Beauch. iii. 241, 248.

In truth, the Republican pride had too good reason to be mortified at this treaty. Conquerors of all their other enemies, they were yet seemingly humbled by their own subjects; and the peasants of La Vendée had extorted terms which the Kings of Europe had in vain contended for. It is painful to think that the renewal of hostilities in this district, and its tragic termination, was owing to the delusive hopes held out by, and ill-judged assistance of Great Britain.

Induced by the flattering accounts of the emigrants, the British government had long been making great preparations for a descent on the western coast of France, by a corps of those expatriated nobles, whose fortunes had been rendered all but desperate by the Revolution. Its success appeared to them so certain, that all the terrors of the laws against the emigrants could not prevent a large force from being recruited among the emigrants in England and Germany, and the prisoners of war in the British prisons. They judged, perhaps wisely, that as the expected movement was to be wholly national, it would be inexpedient to give the command of the expedition to a British commander, or support it by any considerable

Expedition to Quiberon.

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body of English troops. The forces embarked consisted of six thousand emigrants in the pay of England, a regiment of artillerymen from Toulon, and they carried with them eighty pieces of cannon, with all their equipages and arms, and clothing for eighty thousand men. They were divided into two divisions; the first commanded by Puisaye, whose representations had been the origin of the plan; and the second by the Count de Sombreuil. A third division of English troops was destined to support the two first, when they had made good their landing on the French coast. The command of the whole was given to the Count d'Artois, and great hopes were entertained of its success, not so much from the numerical amount of the forces on board, as the illustrious names which the nobles bore, and the expected co-operation of the Chouans and Vendéans, who had engaged, on the first appearance of a prince of the blood, to place eighty thousand men at his disposal.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 135, 143. Beauch. iii. 419, 421. Th. vii. 454.

Running Sea-Fight at Belleisle.

The naval affairs of the French, on the western coast, had been so unfortunate as to promise every facility to the invading force. In winter, the Brest fleet, in obedience to the positive orders of government, put to sea; but its raw and inexperienced crews were totally unable to face the tempests, which kept even the hardy veterans of England in their harbours. The squadron was dispersed by a storm, five ships of the line were lost, and the remainder so much damaged, that twelve line-of-battle ships were alone able in June to put to sea. This fleet, accompanied by thirteen frigates, surprised the advanced-guard of the Channel fleet, under the command of Admiral Cornwallis, near Belleisle, on the 7th June; but such was the skill and intrepidity of the British Admiral, that he succeeded in maintaining a running fight the whole

day, and at length extricated his little squadron without any loss, from the fearful odds by which they were assailed. Six days afterwards, Lord Bridport, with fourteen ships of the line, and eight frigates, hove in sight, and, after two days' manœuvring, succeeded in compelling the enemy to engage. The British Admiral bore down in two columns on the hostile fleet, who, instead of awaiting the contest, immediately fell into confusion, and strained every nerve to escape. In the running fight three ships of the line were captured by the English, and, if the wind had permitted all their squadron to take part in the action, there can be no doubt that the whole French fleet would have been taken or destroyed. As it was, they were so discomfited, that they crowded all sail till they reached the harbour of L'Orient, and made no attempt during the remainder of the season to dispute with the British the empire of the seas.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 147. Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 138. Beauch. iii. 431, 432. Th. vii. 457.

Landing of the Emigrants in Quiberon Bay.

This brilliant engagement having removed all obstacles to the expedition, the three divisions of the emigrants set sail, and, on the 27th, appeared in Quiberon Bay. They immediately landed, to the amount in all of about ten thousand men, and made themselves masters of the Fort of Penthievre, which defends the entrance of the Peninsula of the same name, and, encouraged by the success, disembarked all the immense stores and train of artillery, which were intended to organize the whole Royalist forces of the West of France. But dissensions immediately afterwards broke out between Puisaye and D'Hervilly, neither of whom was clearly invested with the supreme direction, the former having the command of the emigrants, the latter of the British forces. At the same time, a small force detached into the interior, having experienced a check, the troops were withdrawn into

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the peninsula and forts. The Chouans, indeed, flocked in great numbers to the spot, and ten thousand of these brave irregulars were armed and clothed from the British fleet; but it was soon discovered that their desultory mode of fighting was altogether unsuited for co-operation with regular forces; and, on the first occasion on which they encountered the Republicans, they dispersed, leaving the emigrants exposed to the whole shock of the enemy. This check was decisive of the fate of the expedition; the troops were all crowded into the peninsula, and lines hastily constructed to defend its entrance; and it was determined to remain on the defensive; a ruinous policy for an invading force, and which can hardly fail of exposing it to destruction.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 153, 154. Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 71. Beauch. iii. 453–455. 470. Th. vii. 460.

Meanwhile, an inconceivable degree of agitation prevailed in the Morbihan, and all along the western coast of France. The appearance of a few vessels in the Bay of Quiberon before the fleet arrived, filled the peasantry with the most tumultuous joy; without the aid of couriers or telegraphs, the intelligence spread in a few hours through the whole province; and 500,000 individuals, men, women, and children, spent the night round their cottages, too anxious to sleep, and listening to every breeze for farther information. One of their chiefs, D'Allegrè, embarked on board a fishing vessel, and reached Lord Cornwallis's vessel, from whom he received a liberal supply of powder, which was openly disembarked on the coast. Instantly the whole population were at work; every hand was turned towards the manufacture of the implements of war. The lead was stript from the roofs of the houses and churches, and rapidly converted into balls; the women and children made cartridges;[2]

[2] Beauch. iii. 432, 424.

not a hand was idle; universal joy prevailed; the moment of deliverance appeared to be at hand. CHAP. XVIII.

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The intelligence of the disembarkation of the Royalist forces excited the utmost sensation through all France, and demonstrated what might have been the results if a powerful army, capable of arresting the Republicans in the field, had been thrown into the western provinces, while its numerous bands were organized in an effective manner. Hoche immediately took the most vigorous measures to face the danger; his forces were so disposed as to overawe Brittany, and stifle the symptoms of insurrection which manifested themselves in that extensive district, while he himself, having collected seven thousand men, proceeded to the attack of the Peninsula of Quiberon. On the 7th July, he advanced in close columns to the lines, and, after a smart action, drove the Royalists back in confusion to the intrenched camp which they had formed near Fort Penthievre. This disaster led to an open rupture between the emigrants and Chouan chiefs; mutually exasperated, they accused each other of the bad success of the operations, and many thousands of the latter disbanded, and sought to escape from the peninsula.[1]

Vigorous Measures of Hoche.

The Invaders are Blockaded.

7th July.

[1] Th. vii. 466, 473. Jom. vii. 154. Beauch. iii. 445, 546, 547.

While vigour and resolution thus characterized all the operations of the Republicans, disunion and misunderstanding paralyzed the immense force which, under able and united management, might have been placed at the disposal of the Royalists. The Royalist Committee at Paris, either ignorant of, or determined to counteract the designs of Puisaye on the coast, sent instructions to Charette and the Vendéans in Lower Poitou, to attempt no movement till the fleet appeared on his own shores; he, in consequence, renewed his treaty with the Convention, at the very

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time when the expedition was appearing off Quiberon Bay; and refused to accept the arms, ammunition, and money, which Lord Cornwallis tendered to enable him to act with effect. At the very time when every thing depended upon unity of action, and a vigorous demonstration of strength in the outset, the Royalists of Poitou, Anjou, Upper Brittany, and Maine, were kept in a state of inactivity by the Royalist Committee, while the emigrants and the peasants of the Morbihan, not a tenth part of the real force of the insurgents, sustained the whole weight of the Republican power.[1]

[1] Beauch. iii. 459–462.

Their desperate situation.

The misery of the troops, cooped up in the camp, soon became extreme. Eighteen thousand men found themselves shut up in a corner of land, without tents or lodgings of any sort to protect them from the weather, and the want of provisions soon rendered it absolutely necessary to discover some means of enlarging the sphere of their operations. In this extremity, Puisaye, whose courage rose with the difficulties with which he was surrounded, resolved to make an effort to raise the blockade. He was the more encouraged to make this attempt from the arrival of the third division of the expedition, under the Count de Sombreuil, with the best regiments of the Royalists; and bearing with him the commission to himself as commander-in-chief of the whole Allied Forces. For this purpose, four thousand Chouans, under the command of Tinteniac, were sent by sea to the point of St James, to attack the Republican intrenchments in rear, while Count Vauban, with three thousand, was despatched to Carnac, to combine with him in the same object, and Puisaye, at the head of the main body, assailed them in front.[2]

15th July.

[2] Jom. vii. 157–160. Beauch. iii. 478–481.

Notwithstanding the extensive line, embracing

twenty leagues, over which this attack on the Republican intrenchments was combined, it might have been attended with success had not Tinteniac, misled by orders received from the Royal Committee at Paris, been induced, after landing, to move to Elvin, where he indeed destroyed a Republican detachment, but was prevented from taking any part in the decisive action which ensued in the Peninsula; while Vauban, repulsed at Carnac, was compelled to re-embark his troops, and came back only in time to witness the rout of the main body of the Royalists. Meanwhile, Puisaye, ignorant of these disasters, marched out of his camp, at daybreak on the 16th, at the head of four thousand five hundred gallant men, and advanced towards the enemy. The Republicans fell back at his approach to their intrenchments; and a distant discharge of musketry made the Royalists believe that Tinteniac and Vauban had already begun the attack in the rear, and that the decisive moment was come. Full of joy and hope, Puisaye gave the signal for the assault, and the emigrant battalions advanced with the utmost intrepidity to the foot of the redoubts; but scarcely had they reached them when several masked batteries opened a terrible fire of grape, a shower of musketry from above mowed down their ranks, while the strength of the works in front rendered any farther advance impossible. The expected attack in the rear never appeared, the Royalists were exposed alone to the devastating fire of the intrenchments, and after sustaining it for some time with firmness, Puisaye, seeing that the expected diversion had not taken place, gave the signal for a retreat. It was soon converted into a rout by the Republican cavalry, which issued with fury out of their lines, and threw the retiring columns into disorder:[1] D'Hervilly was killed, and the

Unhappy attempts at succour by the Chouan Chiefs.

July 16.

[1] Th. vii. 481—485. Jom. vii. 157—159. Beauch. iii. 495—499.

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assailants driven back with such vehemence to the fort, that, but for the fire of the English cruisers, they would have entered it pell-mell with the fugitives.

This bloody repulse was a mortal stroke to the Royalists. Tinteniac, returning from his unfortunate digression to Elvin, towards the scene of action, on the following day, was encountered and killed, after the dispersion of his forces, by a light column of the Republicans. On the same day Sombreuil disembarked his forces, but they arrived in the fort only in time to share in the massacre which was approaching. Hoche, resolved not to let the Royalists recover from their consternation, determined to storm the fort by escalade, without going through a regular siege. On the night of the 20th July the Republicans advanced in silence along the shore, while the roar of the waves, occasioned by a violent wind, prevented the sound of their footsteps from being heard in the fort. A division, under Menaye, threw themselves into the sea, in order to get round the rocks on which the redoubts were erected, while Hoche himself advanced with the main body to escalade the ramparts in front. Menaye advanced in silence with the water up to the shoulders of his grenadiers, and though many were swallowed up by the waves, a sufficient number got through the perilous pass to ascend and mount the rocky ascent of the fort on the side next the sea. Meanwhile the garrison, confident in their numbers, were reposing in fancied security, when the sentinels on the walls discovered a long moving shadow at the foot of the works. The alarm was instantly given; the cannon fired on the living mass, and the soldiers of Hoche, torn in pieces by the unexpected discharge, were falling into confusion and preparing to fly, when a loud shout from the other side announced the success of the

They are repulsed.

July 17.

July 20.

Storming of the Royalists' Intrenchments.

escalading party under Menaye, and the light of the cannons showed them the tricolor flag flying on the highest part of the fort. At this joyful sight the Republicans returned with fury to the charge, the walls were quickly scaled, and the Royalists driven from their posts with such precipitation, that a large park of artillery placed in one of the most advanced quarters was abandoned.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 162—166. Th. vii. 488—490. Lac. xii 342, 343. Beauch. iii. 509, 517.

Meanwhile, Puisaye and Vauban, who were awakened by the noise, made ineffectual efforts to rally the fugitives in the Peninsula. It was no longer possible; terror had seized every heart; emigrants, Chouans, men and women, rushed in confusion towards the beach, while Hoche, vigorously following up his success, was driving them before him at the point of the bayonet. Eleven hundred brave men, the remains of the emigrant legions, in vain formed their ranks, and demanded with loud cries to be led back to regain the fort. Puisaye had gone on board the English squadron, in order to put in safety his correspondence, which would have compromised almost the whole of Brittany, and the young and gallant Sombreuil could only draw up his little corps on the last extremity of the sand, while the surrounding waves were filled with unfortunate fugitives, striving, amidst loud cries, and showers of balls, to gain the fishing barks which hovered in the distance.[2] Many of these boats sunk from the crowds which filled them, and seven hundred persons lost their lives in that way. The English fleet, from the violence of the tempest, was unable to approach the shore, and the remains of the emigrants were supported only by the fire of an English corvette which swept the beach. At length the Republicans, penetrated with admiration for the noble conduct of their enemies, called out to them to lay

They are driven into the Sea and capitulate.

[2] Th. vii. 492. Lac. xii 343 Puisaye, vi. 511.

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down their arms, and they should be treated as prisoners of war; and Sombreuil, with generous devotion, stipulated that the soldiers should be treated as prisoners of war, and the emigrants allowed to embark, without providing any thing for his own personal safety. The capitulation was agreed to by Humbert and the officers present, though Hoche was not implicated in it; and upon its assurance an officer was despatched through the surf, who, with great difficulty, reached the corvette, and stopped its destructive fire.[1]* The wretched fugitives, numbers of whom were women, who had crowded round this last band of their defenders, now rushed in despair into the waves, deeming instant destruction preferable to the lingering torments awaiting them from their conquerors; from the beach, the Republicans fired at their heads, while many of the Royalist officers in despair, fell on their swords, and others had their hands cut off in clinging to the boats which were already loaded with fugitives. Though numbers were drowned, yet many were saved by the skill and intrepidity of the boats of the British fleet, who advanced to their assistance.[2] One of the last boats which approached the British squadron contained the Duke of Levis, severely wounded. Such was the multitude which crowded the shore, that the

[1] Jom. vii. 171. Lac. xii. 350. Beauch. iii. 509, 520, 521, 522.

[2] Lac. xii. 350. Jom. vii. 168, 169. Th. vii. 493. Beauch. iii. 526, 527.

* Humbert advanced with the white flag, and said aloud, so as to be heard by the whole line, "Lay down your arms; surrender; the prisoners shall be spared." At the same time he asked a conference with the Royalist general; Sombreuil advanced, and after a few minutes conversation with the Republican, returned to his own troops and called out aloud, that he had agreed on a capitulation with the general of the enemy. Many of his officers, more accustomed to the treachery of the Republicans, refused to trust to their promises, and declared, that they would rather fight it out to the last. "What," said Sombreuil, "do you not believe the word of a Frenchman?"—"The faith of the Republicans," said Lanlivy, "is so well known to me, that I will engage we shall all be sacrificed." His prophecy proved too true.

British boats were compelled to keep off for fear of being sunk by the numbers who rushed into them. "Approach," exclaimed the French to the boatmen, "we ask you only to take up our commander, who is bleeding to death." The ensign bearer of the regiment of Hervilly added, "Only save my standard and I die content:" with heroic self-devotion they handed up their leader and standard, and returned to the Republican fire, which speedily sent them to the bottom.

Tallien, whom the Convention had sent down with full power, as Commissioner of government to Quiberon Bay, made an atrocious use of this victory, and stained with ineffaceable disgrace the glory of his triumph over Robespierre. In defiance of the verbal capitulation entered into with the Royalists by Humbert and the officers engaged in the combat, he caused the emigrant prisoners, eight hundred in number, to be conveyed to Auray, where they were confined in the churches, which had been converted into temporary prisons, while he himself repaired to Paris, where, by a cruel report, he prevailed upon the government to disregard the capitulation, and bathe their hands in the blood of the noblest men in France. "The emigrants," said he, "that vile assemblage of ruffians, sustained by Pitt, those execrable authors of all our disasters, have been driven into the waves by the brave soldiers of the Republic; but the waves have thrown them back upon the sword of the law. In vain have they sent forward some flags of truce to obtain conditions; what legal bond can exist between us and rebels, if it be not that of vengeance and death?" In pursuance of this advice the Convention decreed that the prisoners should be put to death, notwithstanding the efforts of the brave Hoche, who exerted himself for the side of mercy.[1]

Atrocious Cruelty of the Republicans.

[1] Lac. xii. 355. Beauch. iii. 530. Jom. vii. 170.

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Noble conduct and Death of the Royalist Prisoners.

The unfortunate men were soon aware of the fate which awaited them; and their conduct in the last extremity reflected as much honour on the Royalist, as their murder did disgrace on the Republican cause. The ministers of religion penetrated into those asylums of approaching death, and the Christian faith supported the last hours of their numerous inmates. An old priest, covered with rags and filth, one of the few who had escaped the sword of the Republicans, conveyed its consolations to the numerous captives; and they joined with him in the last offices of religion. Their last prayers were for their King, their country, and the pardon of their enemies. To the executioners they gave the garments which were still at their disposal. Such was the impression produced by the touching spectacle, that even the Republican soldiers, who had been brought up without any sort of religious impressions, were moved to tears, and joined, uncovered, in the ceremonies which they then for the first time in their lives had witnessed.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 356. Beauch. iii. 529, 530, 539.

When brought before the military commission, Sombreuil disdained to make any appeal in favour of himself; but asserted, in the most solemn terms, that the capitulation had guaranteed the lives of his followers, and that their execution was a crime which neither God nor man would pardon. When led out to execution, he refused to have his eyes bandaged; and when desired to kneel down to receive the fatal discharge, replied, after a moment's reflection, "I will do so; but I bend one knee to my God, and another to my sovereign." The other victims who were led forth insisted in such vehement terms on the capitulation, that the Republican officers were obliged to give them a respite; but the Convention refused to listen to the dictates of humanity, and they were

all ordered for execution. Seven hundred and eleven perished with a constancy worthy of a happier fate; the remainder were suffered to escape by the indulgence of the soldiers who were intrusted with their massacre, and the humanity of the commissioner who succeeded Tallien in the command. These atrocious scenes took place in a meadow near Auray, still held in the highest veneration by the inhabitants, by whom it is termed the field of martyrs.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 356, 359. Beauch. iii. 532, 539. Jom. vii. 171.

The broken remains of the Quiberon expedition were landed in the Isle of Houat, where they were soon after joined by an expedition of two thousand five hundred men from England, which took possession of the Isle Dieu, and where the Count d'Artois assumed the command. The insurgents of La Vendée, under Charette, marched in three columns to the Sables d'Olonne to join the expedition; but so rapid and decisive were the measures of Hoche, that they were soon assailed by a superior force, and compelled to seek safety by separating in the forest of Aizenay. Several partial insurrections at the same time broke out in Brittany; but from want of concert among the Royalist chiefs, they came to nothing. Soon after, the English expedition not having met with the expected co-operation, abandoned Isle Dieu, which was found to be totally unserviceable as a naval station, and returned with the Count d'Artois to Great Britain. From that moment the affairs of the Royalists rapidly declined in all the Western Provinces; the efforts of the Chouans and Vendéans were confined to an inconsiderable guerilla warfare; and it was finally extinguished in the succeeding year by the great army, and able dispositions of Hoche, whom the Directory invested, at the end of the campaign, with the supreme command. It is painful to reflect how different might have been the issue

Rapid decline of the Royalist Cause in the West of France.

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of the campaign had Great Britain really put forth its strength in the contest; and instead of landing a few thousand men on a coast bristling with bayonets, sent thirty thousand men to make head against the Republicans, till the Royalist forces were so organized as to be able to take the field with regular troops.[1]

[1] Beauch. iii. 540, and iv. 29. Mig. ii. 402. Th. vii. 433. Jom. vii. 56, 240, 249.

War on the Rhine.

The situation of the armies on the northern and eastern frontier remained the same as at the conclusion of the last campaign; but their strength and efficiency had singularly diminished during the severe winter and spring which followed. Moreau had received the command of the army of the North, encamped in Holland; Jourdan, that of the Sambre and Meuse, stationed on the Rhine, near Cologne; Pichegru, that of the army of the Rhine, cantoned from Mayence to Strasburg. But all these forces were in a state of extreme penury, from the fall of the paper money, in which their pay was received; and totally destitute of the equipments necessary for carrying on a campaign. They had neither caissons, nor horses, nor magazines; the soldiers were almost naked, and the generals even frequently in want of the necessaries of life, from the failure of the eight francs a-month, in silver, which formed the inconsiderable, but necessary supplement to their paper salaries. Those who were stationed in foreign countries, contrived indeed, by contributions upon the vanquished, to supply the deficiency of their nominal pay; and the luxury in which they lived, formed a strange and painful contrast to the destitute situation of their brethren on the soil of the Republic. Jourdan had neither a bridge equipage to enable him to cross the Rhine, nor a sufficiency of horses to move his artillery and baggage; Kleber, in front of Mayence, had not a quarter of the artillery, or stores necessary for the siege of the place. Dis-

Extreme Penury and Difficulties of the Republicans on the Rhine.

cipline had relaxed with the long-continued sufferings of the soldiers; and the inactivity, consequent on such a state of destitution, had considerably diminished their military spirit. Multitudes had taken advantage of the relaxation of authority following the fall of Robespierre, to desert and return to their homes; and the government, so far from being able to bring them back to their colours, were not even able to levy conscripts in the interior, to supply their place. Numbers resorted to Paris, where the Convention were happy to form them into battalions, for their own protection against the fury of the Jacobins. Soon the intelligence spread that the deserters were undisturbed in the interior; and this extended the contagion to such a degree, that in a short time a fourth of the effective force had returned to their homes. The soldiers thought they had done enough for their country when they had repelled the enemy from its frontiers, and advanced its standards to the Rhine; the generals, doubtful of their authority, did not venture to take severe measures with the refractory; and those who remained, discouraged by the loss of so great a number of their comrades, felt that depression which is the surest forerunner of defeat.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 402. Th. vii. 434. Jom. vii. 56, 58. St Cyr, iii. 31, 34, 41, 50.

State of the contending Armies.

The Austrians, on the other hand, having made the greatest efforts during the winter to reinforce their armies, and not having as yet experienced any part of the exhaustion which extraordinary exertion had brought on the Republican forces, were in a much better state, both in point of numbers, discipline, and equipment. Including the contingents of Swabia and Bavaria, their forces on the Rhine had been raised to 150,000 men; while the French forces on the same frontier, though nominally amounting to 370,000 men, could

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only muster 144,450 in the field.* But such was the state of destitution of these forces, that the cavalry was almost completely dismounted; and Jourdan could not move a few marches from his supplies, until he got twenty-five thousand horses for the service of his artillery.[1]

[1] Jom. vii. 38, 59. St Cyr, iii. 35.

The Rhine, that majestic stream, so long the boundary of the Roman empire, separated the contending armies from the Alps to the ocean. The Imperialists alone had the advantage arising from the possession of Mayence. That bulwark of the empire had been put into the best possible state of defence, and gave the Allies the means of making an irruption with security upon the left bank. Notwithstanding this great advantage, such was the consternation produced by their former reverses, that they remained inactive on the right bank of the river till the end of June, when Marshal Bender, having exhausted all his means of subsistence, and seeing no hope of relief, was compelled to surrender the important fortress of Luxembourg to the Republican generals.[2] Ten thousand men, and

June 24, 1795.

Early inactivity of the Allies.

Fall of Luxembourg.

[2] Th. vii. 435. Jom. vii. 61.

* The distribution of the Republican forces at the commencement of the campaign was as follows in effective troops, deducting the detachments and sick.

	Active.	Garrisons.	Nominal, includ. Garrisons.
North,	67,910	29,000	136,250
Sambre and Meuse,	87,630	66,000	170,300
Rhine and Moselle,	56,820	96,800	193,670
Alps,	14,000	4,800	21,000
Italy,	27,500	24,000	93,500
Eastern Pyrenees,	43,290	4,000	82,790
Western do.	33,780	5,000	75,180
West,	42,000		70,200
Shores of Brittany,	51,000		78,400
Cherbourg,	26,000		37,700
	449,930	229,600	958,990[3]

[3] Ibid. vii. 56.

an immense train of artillery, on this occasion, fell into the hands of the victors.

While the Imperialists were thus allowing the bulwark of the Lower Rhine to fall into the hands of the enemy, the Prince of Condé, on the Upper Rhine, was engaged in a negotiation, by which he hoped to procure the frontier fortresses of Alsace for the Bourbon Princes. This Prince, whose little corps formed part of the left wing of the Austrian army, was engaged in a correspondence with the malecontents in Alsace; and from them he learned that Pichegru was not altogether inaccessible to negotiation. In fact, this illustrious man was, on many accounts, discontented both with his own situation and that of the country. Like Dumourier and La Fayette, he had been horror-struck with the atrocities of the Convention, and saw no hope of permanent amendment in the weak and disunited government which had succeeded it; while, at the same time, the state of destitution to which in common with all the army he was reduced by the fall of the assignats, in which their pay was received, rendered him discontented with a government which made such returns to great patriotic services. During all the extremities of the Reign of Terror, Pichegru and his army, instead of obeying the sanguinary orders of the Dictators, had done every thing in their power to furnish the means of escape to their victims. He had nobly refused to execute the inhuman decree, which forbade the Republican soldiers to make prisoners of the English troops. His soldiers, after the conquest of Holland, had set a rare example of discipline; and the sway he had acquired over them was such as to prevent all the license and insubordination which had followed the conquest of Flanders by the forces of Dumourier. In these circumstances, nothing

Secret Negotiations between Pichegru and the Allies.

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was more natural or more laudable, than that the same General who had secured the independence of his country by his arms, should strive to establish its internal prosperity, by the restoration of a constitutional throne; and it is certain that he engaged in a correspondence with the Prince of Condé for the attainment of this object. The Republican historians allege that his fidelity was shaken by different motives; that his passion for pleasure was restrained by the elusory nature of his pay, which, although nominally four thousand francs a-month, was, in reality, only one hundred francs, from the depreciation of the assignats, and that he yielded to the offer of a marshal's baton, the government of Alsace, a pension of 200,000 francs, the chateau and park of Chambold, and a million in silver. No decisive evidence has yet been produced on the subject; but it is certain that, after six months consumed in mysterious communication, Pichegru broke off the negotiation, and prepared to obey the orders of the Convention, by commencing the campaign.[1]

[1] Th. vii. 441. Lac. xiii. 86. Jom. vii. 62, 67. St Cyr, iii. 69, 71, 75.

Inactivity of the Austrians on the Upper Rhine.

Wurmser, to whom the cabinet of Vienna had intrusted the command of its forces on the Upper Rhine, remained till the beginning of September without taking any step. Mutually afraid, the hostile armies occupied the opposite banks of the Rhine, without making any movement to disquiet each other. His forces, including garrisons, amounted to eighty thousand men; while those of Clairfait, including the same species of force, were ninety-six thousand. The formidable state of defence in which Mayence had been placed, left no hope of reducing it without a regular siege; while a squadron of gun-boats on the Rhine gave the Allies the command both of that stream and of the numerous islands which lay on its bosom.[2]

[2] Jom. vii. 179. St Cyr, iii. 96, 97.

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Jourdan, having at length procured the necessary bridge equipage, prepared to cross the Rhine in the beginning of September. On the 6th of that month he effected the passage, without any serious opposition, at Eichelcamp, Neuwied, and Dusseldorf, and compelled the garrison of the latter town to capitulate. After repulsing the Austrian corps in that vicinity, he advanced slowly towards the Lahn, and established himself on that stream a fortnight afterwards. Meanwhile Pichegru, in obedience to the orders of government, crossed the Upper Rhine at Manheim, and, by the terrors of a bombardment, compelled that important city, one of the principal bulwarks of Germany, to capitulate. This unexpected event threatened to change the fortune of the war; for Pichegru, now securely based on the Rhine, seemed equally in a situation to combine with Jourdan for a general attack on the Allied Forces, or to direct his arms to the reduction of Mayence. Alarmed by these successes, the Austrian Generals made the most prudent dispositions which could have been adopted to arrest the enemy. Clairfait, unable, after the loss of Manheim, to defend the line of the Lahn, abandoned his position on that river, and fell back behind the Mein; while Jourdan, following his opponent, and leaving a division before Ehrenbreitstein, descended into the rich valley of the Mein, and invested Mayence on the right bank of the Rhine, at the same time that Pichegru was debouching from Manheim.[1]

Republicans cross that River. Sept. 6, 1795.

Sept. 20.

Defensive Dispositions of the Austrians.

Sept. 22.

[1] Jom. vii. 19. Toul. v. 314. St Cyr, iii. 105, 110.

In these critical circumstances, Clairfait displayed a degree of vigour and ability, which led to the most important results. Reinforced by fifteen thousand Hungarian recruits, that able General deemed himself in a situation to resume the offensive; and, accumulating his forces on his own right, he succeeded, by a

Able and vigorous Measures of Clairfait.

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skilful march, in turning the French left, and forcing them to fall back into a situation where they had the enemy in their front, and the Rhine in their rear. Jourdan was now in the most perilous position; his communications being threatened, his flank turned, and his rear resting on a great river, exposed his army to destruction, in the event of defeat. To avert the catastrophe of the French army a century before at Turin, no other course remained, but to raise the siege of Mayence, and fall with his whole forces on Clairfait, who was now in communication with Wurmser, or to abandon all his positions, and re-cross the Rhine. The disorganized state of his army rendered the latter project, afterwards so ably practised by Napoleon before Mantua, impracticable; and therefore he commenced his retreat. It was conducted in the utmost confusion; cannon, men, and horses, arrived pell-mell at the bridges over the Rhine, and hardly fifty men of any corps were to be found together when they regained the right bank. The loss in men was inconsiderable, but the moral consequences of the retrograde movement were equivalent to a severe defeat. Had Clairfait been aware of the circumstance, a great and decisive blow might have been struck; for General Marceau, to whom the blockade of Ehrenbreitstein had been intrusted, having burnt his flotilla when he raised the siege, some of the burning vessels were carried down by the stream to Neuwied, where they set fire to the bridge established at that place, which was speedily consumed. Kleber, with twenty-five thousand men, who had not as yet repassed, was now in a desperate situation; but, fortunately for him, the Allies were ignorant of the accident, and Clairfait about the same time relinquished the pursuit, and drew his forces towards Mayence,[1] where he

[1] Toul. v. 314, 316. Jom. vii. 200, 202. St Cyr, iii. 150, 159, 189, 192.

meditated operations, which soon produced the most important results. CHAP. XVIII.

Suddenly abandoning the pursuit of the French left wing, this intrepid General, turned by forced marches to Mayence, at the head of a chosen corps, and at day-break on the following morning issued out by several columns to attack the lines of circumvallation, which were still in the hands of the Republicans on the left bank of the river. These lines, whose remains still excite the admiration of the traveller, were of immense extent, and required an army for their defence. The French army had been engaged for a year in their construction, and they were garrisoned by thirty thousand men. The secret of the march of the Imperial army had been so well preserved, that the besiegers were first apprised of their arrival by the sight of the formidable columns which advanced to storm their intrenchments. The Imperialists advanced in three columns, and in admirable order, to the assault; and such was the consternation of the Republicans, that they abandoned the first line almost without opposition. Such an event is generally decisive of the result in the defence of intrenchments, because the defenders are thunderstruck by seeing their redoubts forced in any quarter, and, instead of thinking of driving back the enemy as in the open field, betake themselves to a precipitate flight. So it proved on the present occasion. The measures of the Austrians were so well taken, that the French found themselves assailed in all quarters at once; they made for some time an obstinate defence in the second line, but at length, perceiving that they were turned by other forces which had crossed below Mayence, they fell into confusion, and fled in all directions. Their loss in this brilliant affair was three thousand men, and the whole

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Oct. 29. He attacks the Lines round Mayence.

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artillery, magazines, and stores, which they had collected with so much care for the siege of the bulwark of Germany. This attack on the part of Clairfait was combined with other operations along the whole line, from Coblentz to Manheim. On the same day on which it took place, an island, which the Republicans had fortified a league above Coblentz, was captured, with two battalions which composed its garrison; and by this success, which rendered the evacuation of the tête du pont of Neuwied unavoidable, they were entirely driven below Mayence to the left bank of the river. At the same time, Wurmser attacked and carried the tête du pont erected by Pichegru on the Neckar; and this success, coupled with the great blow struck by Clairfait, compelled Pichegru to retire behind the Pfrim, which was not accomplished without the utmost confusion. The small number of troops which Clairfait had brought to the left bank of the Rhine, alone saved the Republicans on this occasion from the greatest disasters.[1]

Other Operations along this River.

Oct. 31.

[1] Toul. v. 320, 322. Jom. vii. 252, 259. St Cyr, iii. 200, 202.

Pichegru had left a garrison ten thousand strong in Manheim, and the position which he had occupied enabled him to communicate with the place by his right flank. Despairing of being able to effect its reduction as long as this communication was preserved open, the Austrians resolved to dislodge the French from their position. For this purpose, Clairfait was reinforced with twelve thousand men from the army of the Upper Rhine, and he immediately made preparations for an attack. It took place on the following day, and after an obstinate resistance, the Republicans were compelled to abandon the line of the Pfrim, and retire behind the Elsbach, leaving Manheim to its own resources.[2]

Republicans are driven from before Manheim.

Nov. 9.

Nov. 10.

[2] Toul. v. 324. Th. viii. 95. St Cyr, iii. 210, 219.

While these important events were going forward

on the Upper Rhine, Jourdan, with his defeated and discouraged force, was suffering the most cruel perplexity on the Lower. His army was with difficulty reorganized, and put in a condition for active service; and the Directory having meanwhile succeeded to the helm of affairs, Carnot transmitted to him the most pressing orders to advance to the succour of Manheim, which was now severely pressed by the Austrians. At length, towards the end of November, 26th Nov. he put himself in motion at the head of forty thousand men, and advanced to the Natre, in the midst of the most dreadful weather; but all his efforts were in vain. The central position of Clairfait and Wurmser, both covered the siege of Manheim, and prevented the junction of the Republican armies; the defiles by which a communication could have been maintained, 28th Nov. were all in the hands of the Imperialists, and after several unsuccessful attacks, Jourdan was obliged to fall back, leaving Manheim to its fate. That important place, with a garrison of nine thousand men, capitulated at the same time to Wurmser.[1]

Manheim Capitulates

[1] Jom. vii. 270, 272, 274. Toul. v. 324. Th. viii. 115. St Cyr, iii. 257.

This important event was decisive of the fate of the campaign. Wurmser, now relieved from all apprehensions as to his communications, brought his whole forces to the left bank of the Rhine, and drove back Pichegru to the lines of the Quiech, and the neighbourhood of Landau; while Clairfait pressed Jourdan so severely, that he began to construct an intrenched camp at Traerbach, with a view to secure his passage over the Moselle. In this disastrous state it was with the utmost joy that he received a proposition from the 16th Dec. Austrians, who, as well as their opponents, were exhausted with the fatigues of the campaign, for a suspension of arms during the winter,[2] in virtue of which, a line of demarcation was drawn between the contend-

Wurmser drives Pichegru to the Lines of the Quiech.

[2] Jom. vii. 276. Th. viii. 130. Toul. v. 323. St Cyr, ii. 240.

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ing parties; and both armies were put into winter-quarters on the left bank of the Rhine.

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The French marine was so completely broken by the disasters in the Mediterranean, and at L'Orient, that nothing more of consequence took place at sea during the remainder of the year. The English availed themselves of their maritime supremacy to make themselves masters of the important station of the Cape of Good Hope, which surrendered to Sir James Craig on the 16th of September. Unable to act in large squadrons, the French confined themselves to mere predatory expeditions; and the vast extent of the English commerce afforded them an ample field for this species of warfare, from which, towards the close of the year, they derived great success.[1]

Maritime operations.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 139. Jom. vii. 330.

By the result of this campaign, the Allies gained considerable advantages. The career of French conquest was checked, the Republican soldiers driven with disgrace behind the Rhine; and while the Imperial forces, so lately disheartened and desponding, were pressing forward with the energy of conquest, their opponents, distracted and disorderly, had lost all the spirit with which they formerly were animated. The movements of Clairfait and Wurmser proved that they had profited by the example of their adversaries; their tactics were no longer confined to a war of posts, or the establishment of a cordon over an extensive line of country, but showed that they were aware of the value of an interior line of operations, and of the importance of bringing an overwhelming force to the decisive point. By adopting these principles, they checked the career of conquest, restored the spirit of their troops, and not only counterbalanced the disadvantage of inferior numbers, but inflicted severe losses upon their adversaries.

Results of the Campaign.

This result was the natural effect of the continuance of the contest. The energy of a democracy is often formidable during a period of popular excitement, and is capable of producing unparalleled exertions for a limited period; but it rarely succeeds in maintaining a lasting contest, with a regular and organized government. The efforts of the populace resemble the spring of a wild beast; if the first burst fails, they rarely attempt a second. During the invasions of 1793 and 1794, the French nation were animated with an extraordinary spirit, and urged to the defence of their country by every motive which can sway a multitude; but their efforts, how great soever, necessarily and rapidly declined. During the contest they had exhausted the means of maintaining a prolonged war; the vehemence of their exertions, and the tyranny by which they were called forth, rendered it impossible that they could be continued. The nation, accordingly, which had 1,200,000 men on foot during the invasion of 1794, could not muster a third of the number in the following campaign; and the victor of Fleurus, within a year after his triumph, was compelled to yield to an inferior enemy.

Declining Affairs and Exhausted State of the Republicans.

Nothing also is more remarkable than the comparatively bloodless character of the war, up to this period. The battle of Jemappes, which gave Flanders to Dumourier; that of Nerwinde, which restored it to the Imperialists; that of Fleurus, which gave it back to the Republicans, were all concluded at a cost of less than five thousand men to the vanquished; and the loss sustained by the French at storming the lines of Mayence, which decided the fate of the German campaign, was only three thousand men. Whereas, the loss of the Austrians at Aspern was thirty thousand; that of the Russians at Borodino, forty thou-

Feeble character of the War up to this period.

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sand; that of the Allies at Waterloo, twenty thousand; and out of seven thousand five hundred native English who conquered at Albuera, hardly two thousand were unwounded at the conclusion of the fight. So much more desperately did the parties fight as the contest advanced; so much more vehement were the passions excited in its latter stages; and so much more terrible was the struggle when the Republicans, instead of the lukewarm soldiers of the South, met the sturdy inhabitants of the North of Europe.

Great Results which might have followed a vigorous exertion of the Allied strength;

Every thing, therefore, conspires to indicate, that, by a concentrated and vigorous effort, after the first burst of French patriotism was over, the objects of the war might have been achieved; not certainly the forcing of a hateful dynasty upon France, but the compelling it to retire within those limits which are consistent with the peace of Europe, and give up its attempts to propagate its revolutionary principles in other states. Had Prussia, instead of weakly deserting the alliance, in the beginning of 1795, sent 100,000 men to the Rhine, to support the Austrian troops; had Great Britain raised 300,000 soldiers, instead of 120,000, and sent eighty thousand native English to Flanders, instead of five thousand emigrants to Quiberon Bay, no one can doubt, that in the state of exhaustion in which France then was, the Republic would have been compelled to abandon all its conquests. The moment her armies were forced back from foreign states, and thrown upon their own resources; the moment that war was prevented from maintaining war, the weakness arising from her financial embarrassments, and blighted industry, would have become apparent. The great error of the Allies, and, above all, of England, at this period, was, that they did not make sufficiently vigorous efforts at the

commencement; and thought it enough, in a struggle with the desperate energy of a revolutionary state, to exert the moderate strength of an ordinary contest. Nothing is so ill judged, in such a situation, as the niggardly conduct which prolongs a war; by spending L. 50,000,000 more at its commencement, Great Britain might have saved L. 500,000,000; by sending an army worthy of herself to the Continent in 1795, she might have then achieved the triumph of 1815.

From the Lassitude of the French.

It was to this period of lassitude and financial embarrassments, necessarily consequent upon a series of extraordinary revolutionary exertions, that Mr Pitt always looked for the successful termination of the war. Possibly even with the slight efforts which alone were then thought practicable by this country, his expectations might have been realized before many years had elapsed, if the ordinary course of human affairs had continued. But the hand of fate was on the curtain, a new era was about to open on human affairs, and a resistless impulse to be given for a period to French ambition, by the genius of that wonderful man who has since chained the history of Europe to his own biography.[1]

[1] Scott's Napoleon, ii. ad fin.

CHAPTER XIX.

FRENCH REPUBLIC.—FROM THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIRECTORY.

ARGUMENT.

General reaction against the Reign of Terror—Universal Transports at the Fall of Robespierre—Gradual Fall of the Committee of Public Safety—And Rise of the Thermidorians—Contests between the two Parties—Rise of the Jeunesse Dorée—Their Contests with the Jacobins—They close their Hall and destroy their Power—Trial of the Prisoners from Nantes—Their Acquittal, and the Trial of Carrier—Dreadful Atrocities divulged during its Progress—He is Condemned—Return to Humanity in the Convention—Public Manners during this Period—Bals des Victimes—Gradual abolition of the Revolutionary Measures—Of the Law of the Maximum, and an Amnesty to the Children of Persons condemned during the Revolution—Impeachment of Billaud Varennes and the Jacobin Leaders—Extreme Distress and Agitation in Paris—Revolt of the Populace—Defeat of the Insurgents—Humanity of the Thermidorians after their Victory—Condemned Prisoners are transported to Ham—And thence to Cayenne—Fresh Efforts of the Jacobins—Excessive misery at Paris—Great Insurrection in May—Convention Besieged—Heroic conduct of Boissy d'Anglas—They obtain the mastery of the Convention—But are at length defeated by the Committees and the Jeunesse Dorée—Trial and Condemnation of Rome and the Jacobin Remnant—Condemnation of Feraud—Disarming of the Faxbourg St Antoine—And final termination of the rule of the Multitude—Farther progress of humane Measures, and Abolition of the Revolutionary Tribunal—Formation of a new Constitution—General abandonment of Democratic Principles from the force of Experience—Violent reaction in the South of France—Generous conduct of the Duke of Orleans' Sons—Death and last days of Louis XVII. in Prison—Liberation of the Duchess d'Angouleme—Continued Captivity of Lafayette—General interest in his behalf—Completion of the new Constitution—The Constitution of the Directory—Elective Franchise confined to the class of Proprietors—Vast Agitation in Paris and throughout France at these changes—Coalition of the Royalists, and sections of the National Guard—Vehement Royalist Declamations at the Sections—Extreme Agitation at Paris—Convention throw themselves on the Army—Sections openly resolve to revolt—Meeting of the Electors at the Theatre Français—They resolve to fight—Measures of the Convention—Failure of Menou against the Insurgents—Armed force of the Convention intrusted to Barras and Napoleon—His decisive Measures in seizing the Artillery—Combat round the Tuileries—Defeat of the Sections—Establishment of Military despotism—Humanity of the Convention after their Victory—Election of

the Council of Ancients, and Five Hundred—Reflections on the History of the Convention—Slow growth of all durable Human Institutions—General Reflections on the History of the Revolution, and the causes of its Disasters.

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1794.

"IT is a sad calamity," says Jeremy Taylor, "to see a kingdom spoiled, and a church afflicted; the priests slain with the sword, and the blood of nobles mingled with cheaper sand; religion made a cause of trouble, and the best men most cruelly persecuted; government turned, and laws ashamed; judges decreeing in fear and covetousness, and the ministers of holy things setting themselves against all that is sacred. And what shall make recompense for this heap of sorrows when God shall send such swords of fire? Even the mercies of God, which shall then be made public, when the people shall have suffered for their sins. For I have known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescences, and spend itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but little clusters to the wine-press; but when the Lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant, and make it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made account of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. It is thus of an afflicted kingdom cured of its surfeits and punished for its sins, it bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness; and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for his rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and his anger into mercy."[1]

[1] Jeremy Taylor, vi. 182, Heber's Edit.

Never were these truths more strongly exemplified than in France during the progress of the Revolution.

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Each successive convulsion had darkened the political atmosphere; anguish and suffering incessantly increased; virtue and religion seemed banished from the earth; relentless cruelty reigned triumphant. The bright dawn of the morning, to which so many millions had turned in thankfulness, was soon overcast, and darkness deeper than midnight overspread the world. "But there is a point of depression in human affairs," says Hume, "from which the change is necessarily for the better." This change is not owing to any oscillation between good and evil, in the transactions of the world, but to the reaction which is always produced by long continued suffering. Wherever the tendency of institutions is erroneous, an under current begins to flow, destined to correct their imperfections; when they become destructive, it overwhelms them.

General reaction against the Reign of Terror.

The result of the conspiracy of Robespierre and the Municipality proved that this point had been reached under the Reign of Terror. On all former occasions, since the meeting of the States-General, the party which revolted against the constituted authorities had been victorious; on that it was vanquished. The Committees of the Assembly, the subsisting government, crushed a conspiracy headed by the powerful despot who wielded the revolutionary energy of France, and was supported by the terrible force of the Fauxbourgs, which no former authority had been able to withstand. This single circumstance demonstrated that the revolutionary movement had reached its ascendant, and that the opposite principles of order and justice were beginning to resume their sway. From that moment the anarchy and passions of the people subsided, the storms of the moral world began to be stilled, through the receding darkness the an-

cient landmarks dimly appeared, and the sun of Heaven at length broke through the clouds which enveloped him.

> " Defluit saxis agitatus humor;
> Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes;
> Et minax nam sic voluere, ponto
> Unda recumbit."

An interesting episode in the annals of the Revolution occurred in the prisons during the contest which preceded the fall of the tyrant. From the agitation and cries in the streets, the captives were aware that a popular movement was impending, and a renewal of the massacres of 2d September was anticipated from the frantic multitude. Henriot had been heard in the Place de Carrousel to pronounce the ominous words, " We must purge the prisons." The sound of the générale and of the tocsin made them imagine that their last hour had arrived, and they embraced each other with tears, exclaiming, " We are all now eighty years of age." After two hours of breathless anxiety, they heard the decree of the Convention cried through the streets, which declared Robespierre *hors la loi*, and by daybreak intelligence arrived that he was overthrown. The transports which ensued may be imagined; ten thousand prisoners were relieved from the prospect of instant death. In one chamber, a female prisoner, who was to have been brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal that very day, was made acquainted with the intelligence by means of signs from a woman in the street, before she ventured to give public demonstration of her joy; her name became afterwards memorable, it was JOSEPHINE BEAUHARNOIS, future Empress of France.[1]

[1] Memoires de Josephine, i. 327. Lac. xii. 124, 125. Mig. ii. 348—349.

The transports were the same through all France. The passengers precipitated themselves from the pub-

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lic conveyances, embraced the bystanders, exclaiming, "My friends, rejoice, Robespierre is no more!" Three hundred thousand captives in the prisons were freed from the terror of death; five hundred thousand trembling fugitives issued from their retreats, and embraced each other with frantic joy on the public roads.[1] An epitaph designed for his tomb expressed in powerful language the public opinion on the consequence of prolonging his life:

[1] Lac. xii. 126, 128.

> "Passant, ne pleure point son sort,
> Car si vivait tu serais mort."

Universal transports which his Fall occasioned.

No words can convey an idea of the impression which the overthrow of Robespierre produced in Europe. The ardent and enthusiastic in every country had hailed the beginning of the French Revolution as the dawn of a brighter day in the political world, and in proportion to the warmth of their hopes had been the grievousness of their disappointment at the terrible shades by which it was so early overcast. The fall of the tyrant revived these hopes, and put an end to these apprehensions; the moral laws of nature were felt to be still in operation; the tyranny had only existed till it had purged the world of a guilty race, and then it was itself destroyed. The thoughtful admired the wisdom of Providence, which had made the wickedness of men the instrument of their own destruction; the pious beheld in their fall an immediate manifestation of the Divine justice.

The Revolution of 9th Thermidor, however, was by no means, as is commonly supposed, the reaction of virtue against wickedness; it was the effort of one set of assassins threatened with death against another. The leaders of the revolt in the Convention which overthrew the central government, Billaud Varennes,

Collot d'Herbois, Fouché, Amar, Barrere, were in no respect better, in some worse, than Robespierre and St Just. They conspired against him, not because they hated his system, but because they perceived it was about to descend upon themselves. Little amelioration of the political system was to be expected from their exertions. It was public opinion clearly and energetically expressed after the fall of the Committee of Public Safety, which compelled them to revert to the path of humanity. But this opinion was irresistible, it forced itself upon persons the most adverse to its principles, and finally occasioned the destruction of the very men who, for their own sakes, had brought about the first resistance to the reign of blood.[1]

[1] Hist. de la Conv. iv 215, 218.

The Convention had vanquished Robespierre by means of a unanimous effort, headed and directed by the committees; but this revulsion of public feeling proved too strong for the committees themselves. The charm of the Decemviral Government was broken when its head was destroyed. On the day after the fall of Robespierre there were but two parties in Paris, that of the committees, who strove to maintain the remnant of their power, and that of the liberators, who laboured to subvert them. The latter were from the first distinguished by the name of *Thermidorians*, from the day on which their triumph was achieved. Tallien was at their head, and they soon numbered among their supporters all the generous youth of the metropolis.[2]

Gradual fall of the Committee of Public Safety.

[2] Mig. ii. 348, 349 Th. vii. 3, 4. Lac. xii. 129.

The party of the committees was paralysed by the fall of the Municipality of Paris, sixty of the most obnoxious members of which had been executed the day after the death of Robespierre. Their influence consisted only in the possession of the machinery of

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government, and in the vigour of some of their members, all of whom saw no safety to themselves but in the maintenance of the Revolutionary Government. Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, Barrere, Vadier, Amar, and Carnot, constituted a body, influenced by the same principles, capable of maintaining their authority in the most difficult circumstances, but after the counter-revolution of the 9th Thermidor, the current of public opinion was irresistible.[1]

1 Mig. ii. 349. Th. vii. 14. Lac. xii. 128. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 224, 225.

And rise of the Thermidorians.

The Thermidorians were composed of the whole centre of the Assembly, the remnant of the Royalists, and the party of Danton. Boissy d'Anglas, Sieyes, Cambaceres, Chenier, Thibaudeau, from the moderate party, ranged themselves beside Tallien, Freron, Legendre, Barras, Bourdon de L'Oise, Rovere, and others, who had followed the colours of Danton. Four of this party were chosen to replace the executed Members of the Committee of Public Safety, and soon succeeded in moderating its sanguinary measures. But great caution was necessary in effecting the change. The Jacobins were still powerful from their numbers, their discipline, and their connection with the affiliated societies throughout France; and their early support of the Revolution identified them in the eyes of the populace with its fortunes. Hence the Thermidorians did not venture at first to measure their strength with such antagonists, and four days after the death of Robespierre the sittings of their terrible club were resumed. But the friends of clemency daily gained accessions of strength. The seventy-three Members of the Assembly, who had protested against the violence of 31st May, were brought forth from prison, and joined their liberators.[2] Such of the victims of that unhappy day as were still alive, were also re-

2 Mig. ii. 349, 350. Lac. xii. 129, 130. Th. vii. 16, 17.

stored to their places in the Assembly, and augmented the phalanx of the friends of humanity.

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The two parties were not long in measuring their strength after their common victory. Barrere, on the part of the Committee, proposed, on the 30th July, that the Revolutionary Tribunal should be continued, and that Fouquier Tinville should continue to act as public accuser. At his name a murmur of indignation arose in the Assembly, and Freron, taking advantage of the general feeling, exclaimed,—"I propose that we at length purge the earth of that monster, and that Fouquier be sent to lick up in Hell the blood which he has shed." The proposal was carried by acclamation. Barrere endeavoured to maintain the tone of authority which he had so long assumed, but it was too late. He was obliged to leave the Tribune, and the defeat of the Committee was apparent.[1]

Contests between the two Parties.

July 30.

[1] Mig. ii. 351. Lac. xii. 130. Th. vii. 37, 38.

The trial of this great criminal took place with extraordinary formality, and in the most public manner, before the Revolutionary Tribunal. It developed all the injustice and oppression of that iniquitous court; the trial of sixty or eighty prisoners in one sitting of three or four hours; the inhuman stopping of any defence, and the atrocious celerity of the condemnations. After a long process, he was condemned, and fourteen jurymen of the same Tribunal along with him. The indignation of the populace was strongly manifested, when they were led out for execution; cries, groans, and applauses, broke from the crowd as they passed along. The sombre, severe air of Fouquier, especially attracted notice; he maintained an undaunted aspect, and answered the reproaches of the people by ironical remarks on the dearth of provisions under which they laboured.[2]

[2] Toul. v. 232.

The next measures of the Assembly were of a hu-

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mane tendency. The law of 22d Prairial against suspected persons was repealed, and though the Revolutionary Tribunal was continued, its forms were remodelled, and its vengeance directed in future chiefly against the authors of the former calamities. The captives were gradually liberated from confinement, and, instead of the fatal chariots which formerly stood at the gates of the prisons, crowds of joyous citizens were seen receiving with transport their parents or children, restored to their arms. Agreeably to the advice of Danton and Camille Desmoulins, the captives were not all discharged at once, but they were all at length restored to their friends; and at the end of two months, out of ten thousand suspected persons, not one remained in the prisons of Paris.[1]*

[1] Lac. xii. 131, 144, 145. Mig. ii. 351. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 220, 231.

The imprudent zeal of one of their party, however, soon convinced the Thermidorians how necessary it was to proceed with caution in the counter-revolutionary measures. Without any general concert with his friends, Lecointre denounced Billaud, Collot, and Barrere, from the Committee of General Safety, and Vadier, Amar, and Vouland, from that of Public Safe-

* The efforts of the Jacobins to prevent the liberation of the persons confined in prison in the departments, whom they all designated as aristocrats, were very great: but the numerous and heart-rending details of the massacres which were transmitted to the Convention from every part of the country overwhelmed all their opposition. Among the rest, one related by Merlin de Thionville excited particular attention. It was an order signed by a man named Lefevre, an adjutant-general, addressed to, and executed by, a Captain Macé, to drown at Paimboeuf forty-one persons; of whom one was an old blind man 76 years of age; twelve women of different ages; twelve girls below 20 years; fifteen children, of whom ten were between 5 and 10 years of age; and five still at the breast. The order was conceived in these terms, and rigidly executed. "It is ordered to Peter Macé, captain of the brig Destiny, to put ashore the woman Bidet, and the remainder of the preceding list shall be taken to the heights of Black Peter, and thrown into the sea, as rebels to the law. That operation concluded, he will return to his post."—Hist. de la Conv. iv. 242, 243.

ty, in the National Assembly. This measure was premature; it alarmed the friends of the Revolution, and was almost unanimously rejected. But for the strong feeling against the former government which existed in Paris, this defeat might have been fatal to the friends of humanity, and restored the Reign of Terror.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 132. Mig. ii. 352.

By the advice of Madame de Fontenai, the courageous and eloquent friend of Tallien, the Thermidorians called to their support the youth of the metropolis; men, at an age when generous feeling is strong, and selfish considerations weak, and whose minds, unwarped by the prejudices or passions of former years, had expanded during the worst horrors of the Revolution. They soon formed a powerful and intrepid body, ever ready to combat the efforts of the Jacobins, and confirm the order which was beginning to prevail. Composed of the most respectable ranks in Paris, they almost all numbered a parent or relation among the victims of the Revolution, and had imbibed with their earliest breath the utmost horror at its sanguinary excesses. To distinguish themselves from the populace, they wore a particular dress, called the *Costume à la Victime,* consisting of a robe without a collar, expressive of their connexion with those who had suffered by the guillotine. Instead of arms, they bore short clubs, loaded with lead, and were known by the name of *La Jeunesse Dorée.* They prevailed over the Jacobins at the Palais Royale, where they had the support of the shopkeepers of that opulent quarter, but were worsted in the gardens of the Tuileries, where the vicinity of the club of their antagonists rendered their influence predominant. Their contests with the democrats were incessant;[2] on the streets, in the theatres, in the public walks, they were

Rise of the Jeunesse Dorée.

[2] Lac. xii. 135, 147. Th. vii. 38, 39, 112, 113. Mig. ii. 352, 356, 357.

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ever at their post, and contributed by their exertions in a most signal manner to confirm and direct the public mind. In revolutions, the great body of mankind are generally inert and passive; the lead speedily falls into the hands of those who have the boldness to take it.

These contests between the two parties at length assumed the most important character. The whole of Paris became one vast field of battle, in which the friends of humanity, and the supporters of terror, strove for the mastery of the Republic. But public opinion pronounced itself daily more strongly in favour of the Thermidorian party. Billaud Varennes declared in the Popular Society:—"The lion sleeps, but his wakening will be terrible." This declaration occasioned the greatest agitation in Paris; and the cry was universal to assault the Club of the Jacobins. The National Guard of the Sections supported the troops of the Jeunesse Dorée, and their combined forces marched against that ancient den of blood. After a short struggle the doors were forced, and the Club dispersed. On the following day they proceeded to lay their complaints before the Convention, but Rewbell, who drew up the report on their complaints, pronounced their doom in the following words:—

Their Contests with the Jacobins. They close their Hall, and destroy their Power.

"Where was the Reign of Terror organized? At the Club of the Jacobins. Where did it find its supporters and satellites? Among the Jacobins. Who are they who have covered France with mourning; peopled its soil with Bastiles; and rendered the Republican yoke so odious, that a slave bent beneath his fetters would refuse to live under it? The Jacobins. Who now regret the hideous yoke from which we have so recently escaped? The Jacobins. If you want courage to pronounce on their fate at this moment,

you have no longer a Republic, since you have the Jacobins." The Assembly provisionally suspended their sittings; but the Club having resumed their meetings on the following day, they were again assailed by the Troupe Dorée, with the powerful cry, "Vive la Convention! a bas les Jacobins!"[1] After an ineffectual struggle, they were finally dispersed, with every mark of ignominy and contempt; and on the following day, the commissioners of the Convention put a seal on their papers, and terminated their existence.[1]

8th Sept. 1794.

[1] Lac. xii. 116, 155. Mig. ii. 357, 359. Toul. v. 135, 136. Th. vii. 115, 116, 135, 151, 159, 164.

Thus fell the Club of the Jacobins, the victim of the crimes it had sanctioned, and the reaction it had produced. Within its walls all the great changes of the Revolution had been prepared, and all its principal scenes rehearsed; from its energy the triumph of the democracy had sprung; and from its atrocity its destruction arose. A signal proof of the tendency of Revolutionary violence, to precipitate its supporters into crime, and render them at last the victims of the atrocity which they have committed.

Another event, which contributed in the most powerful manner to influence the public mind, was the trial of the prisoners from Nantes, who had been brought up to Paris, under the reign of Robespierre. These captives, who were one hundred and thirty in number, when they left the banks of the Loire, were reduced to ninety-four, by the barbarous treatment they experienced on the road. Their trial was permitted to proceed by the Thermidorian party, in hopes that the detail of the atrocities of the Jacobin leaders, would increase the horror which they had excited in the public mind.[2] It proceeded slowly, and the series of cruelties which it developed, exceeded even what

Trial of the Prisoners from Nantes.

[2] Th. vii. 144. Toul. v. 101.

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the imagination of Dante had figured of the most terrible.

Their Acquittal, and the Trial of Carrier.

The exposure of these, and similar atrocities, could not fail in increasing the public indignation against the society of the Jacobins, from whose emissaries they had all proceeded. The prisoners were acquitted amidst the acclamations of the people; and the public voice, wrought up to the highest pitch by the recital of these atrocities, loudly demanded the punishment of their authors. Pressed by the force of public opinion, the Convention was obliged to authorize the accusation of Carrier, the head of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes, how unwilling soever they might be to sanction a proceeding which they were conscious might be drawn into an example fatal to many of themselves.[1]

[1] Toul. v. 105, 114. Th. vii. 145, 146.

Dreadful Atrocities divulged in its progress.

The trial of this infamous man developed a still more dreadful series of iniquities, and contributed perhaps more than any other circumstance to confirm the inclination of the public mind. One of the witnesses deponed, "that he had obtained a licence to visit a chamber in the prisons where three hundred infants were confined; he found them groaning amidst filth, and shivering of cold; on the following morning he returned, but they were all gone; they had been drowned the preceding night in the Loire." Many thousand persons of both sexes, and all ages, including an extraordinary number of children, perished in this inhuman manner. Carrier did not deny these atrocities, but sought only to justify himself by alleging the orders of the Committee of Public Safety at Paris, and the necessity of making reprisals against the fanatical cruelty of the insurgents of La Vendée. The massacres of the children, of the women, and the noyades of the priests,[2] which could not be vindicated on that

[2] Toul. v. 129, 130. Th. vii. 169.

ground, he alleged, he had not commanded; although he could not dispute that he had permitted them, in a district where his authority was unbounded.

After a long trial, this infamous wretch was condemned, and with him another member of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes. The acquittal of the others excited the public indignation so strongly, that the Convention ordered that they should be arrested anew, and the Tribunal which had absolved them abolished.[1]

He is Condemned.

[1] Lac. xii. 167, 168.

Yielding to the growing influence of public opinion, which daily pronounced itself more strongly in favour of humane measures, the Convention at length revoked the decree which had expelled the nobles and priests; and Cambaceres, taking advantage of a moment of enthusiasm, proposed a general amnesty for all revolutionary offences other than those declared capital by the criminal code. The proposition was favourably received, and remitted to a committee. On the following day, Tallien proposed the suppression of all the Revolutionary Tribunals;[2] the Jacobins vehemently opposed the proposal, and the Assembly, fearful of precipitating matters by too hasty measures, contented themselves for the present with abridging their power.

8th Dec. 1794.

Return to Humanity in the Convention.

[2] Toul. v. 143.

The manners of the people during those days of reviving order, exhibited an extraordinary mixture of revolutionary recklessness with the reviving gaiety and elegance of the French character. The captives recently delivered from prison, comprised all the higher classes in Paris, and their habits gave the tone to the general manners of the day. Never was seen a more remarkable union than their circles afforded of grief and joy, of resentment and forgetfulness, of prudence and recklessness, of generous exaltation, and blameable indifference. The first attempt made was to return to

Public Manners during this Period.

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elegance, any approach to luxury in the dilapidated state of their fortunes was out of the question. The barbarous retaliation of severity for cruelty, which produced such a frightful reaction in the South of France, was unknown in the metropolis; in the saloons of the Thermidorians, nothing but the most humane measures were proposed, or the most generous sentiments uttered. Minds subdued by misfortune, and influenced by the approach of death, with religious feeling, breathed, on their first return into the world, much of that benevolent and Christian spirit which had been awakened in many cases for the first time in their minds.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 172, 173. Th. vii. 218. 223.

The two centres of the Society of Paris were the Fauxbourg St Germain, and the Quarter of the Chaussée d'Antin; the first comprising the residence of the remains of the nobility, the last of the bankers and merchants who had risen to wealth during the recent troubles. Rigid economy prevailed in the former; the pride of riches, and the passion for newly acquired distinction swayed the latter. At the theatres, at the public assemblies, every thing breathed the recent deliverance from death. No such thunders of applause shook the opera, as when the orchestra struck up the favourite air of the Troupe Dorée, called *le Réveil du Peuple*, which successfully combated the revolutionary energy of the Marseilloise hymn. One of the most fashionable and brilliant assemblies was called *Le Bal des Victimes*, the condition of entrance to which was the loss of a near relation by the guillotine. Between the country dances, they said, "We dance on the tombs;" and a favourite dress for the hair was adopted from the way in which it had been arranged immediately before execution. The almanacks most in request were called "Les Almanacks des Prisons,"

Bals des Victimes.

in which the sublime resignation and courage of many of the captives were mingled with the ribaldry and indecency with which others had endeavoured to dispel the gloom of that sombre abode. But the Christian virtue of charity was never more eminently conspicuous than among those who, recently delivered themselves from death, knew how to appreciate the sufferings of their fellow-creatures.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 174, 176. Mig. ii. 356.

Gradual Abolition of the Revolutionary Measures.

Meanwhile the Convention gradually undid the laws which had passed during the Revolutionary government. The law of the maximum of prices, which had been introduced to favour the tumultuous inhabitants of towns, at the expense of the industrious labourers of the country; the prohibitions against Christian worship; the statutes confiscating the property of the Gironde party, condemned by the Committees, were successively repealed. This was followed by a general measure, restoring to the families of all persons condemned since the Revolution, their property, so far as it had not been disposed of to others. The Abbé Morellet published an eloquent appeal to the public, entitled, *Le Cri des Familles*, and Legendre concluded a powerful speech in their favour with these touching words:—"If I possessed one acre belonging to these unfortunate sufferers, never could I taste of repose. In the evening, while walking in my solitary garden, I would fancy I beheld in each rosebud, the tears of an orphan whom I had robbed of its inheritance." The bust of Marat was soon after broken at the Theatre Feydeau, by a band of the Troupe Dorée, and next day destroyed in all the public places. His body, which had been buried with extraordinary pomp in the Pantheon, was taken out and thrown into a common sewer. About the same time, the survivors of the twenty-two proscribed members of the

Amnesty to Children of those Executed during the Revolution.

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Girondist party, who had been in concealment since the revolt of the 31st May, were restored to their seats in the Assembly; and the Thermidorian party saw itself strengthened by the accession of Louvet, Isnard, Lanjuinais, Henri Lariviere, and others, alike estimable for their talents, and their constancy under adverse fortune.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 361, 363. Lac. xii. 177—179. Th. vii. 229, 230. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 237, 245.

Strengthened by the accession of so many new members, and the increasing force of public opinion, Tallien and his friends proceeded to the decisive measure, of impeaching Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, Barrere, and Vadier, the remaining heads of the Jacobins. "You demand the Restoration of Terror," said Tallien: "Let us consider the means it employs before we estimate its effects. A government can never inspire terror but by menacing with capital punishments: by menacing without intermission, without distinction, without investigation, all who oppose it: by menacing without proof, on mere suspicion, on no ground at all; by striking continually with relentless hand, in order to inspire terror into all the world. You must suspend over every action a punishment, over every word a threat, over silence even a suspicion: you must place under every step a snare, in every family a traitor, in every tribunal an assassin: you must put every citizen to the torture, by the punishment of multitudes, and subsequent massacre of the executioners, lest they should become too powerful. Such is the system of governing by terror: does it belong to a free, humane, and regular government, or to the worst species of tyranny?" These eloquent words produced a great impression: the opposition against the Jacobins became so powerful, both within and without the assembly, that a return to severe measures was impossible, and the government was

Impeachment of Billaud Varennes and the Jacobin Leaders.

[2] Hist. de la Conv. iv. 231.

swept along by the universal passion for a humane administration. CHAP. XIX.

This bold step, however, excited the most violent tumults among the democratic party. Several causes at that period contributed to inflame the public discontent. The winter, which had set in with uncommon severity, exposed many of the lower classes to suffering; a scarcity of provisions was, as usual, ascribed by the multitude to the conduct of government, and the dreadful depreciation of the assignats, threatened almost every individual in the kingdom with ruin. Instruments of this dangerous description to the amount of above eight milliards of francs, or L. 400,000,000 sterling, had been put into circulation by the Revolutionary government, and although their influence had been prodigious at the moment in sustaining the credit of the state, yet their nominal value soon gave way from the distrust of government, and the immense quantity of confiscated property which was at the same time brought to sale, and they had now fallen to one-fifteenth of the sum for which they were issued. "The worst rebellions," says Lord Bacon, "are those which proceed from the stomach;" and of this truth Paris soon furnished an example. The Jacobin leaders, threatened with accusations, used their utmost exertions to rouse the populace, and the discontent arising from so much suffering, made them lend a willing ear to their seditious harangues.[1]

1795.

March 1795.

Extreme Distress and Agitation.

[1] Mig. ii. 364, 365. Lac. x. 174—191. Th. vii. 249, 250. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 232.

Carnot was not included in the Act of Accusation; but he had the magnanimity to declare, that, having acted with his colleagues for the public good, he had no wish but to share their fate. This generous proceeding embarrassed the accusers; but, in order to avoid implicating so illustrious a character in the impeachment, it was resolved to limit it to some only of

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the members of the Committee, and Amar, Vouland, and the painter David, were excluded, the last of whom had disgraced a fine genius by the most savage revolutionary fanaticism.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 194.

1st April, 1795.

Revolt of the Populace.

On the 1st April, a revolt was organized in the Fauxbourgs, to prevent the trial of Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, Barrere, and Vadier, which was about to commence two days after. The cry of the insurgents was bread, and the constitution of 1793, and the freedom of the patriots in confinement. The universal suffering which had followed the democratic rule, afforded the Jacobins too powerful a lever to move the passions of the people. "Since France had become Republican," says the graphic annalist, himself a member of the Convention, and supporter of Robespierre, "every species of evil had accumulated upon its devoted head. Famine, a total cessation of commerce, civil war, attended by its usual accompaniments, conflagration, robbery, pillage, and murder: justice was interrupted, the sword of the law wielded by iniquity: property spoliated, confiscation rendered the order of the day, the scaffold permanently erected, calumnious denunciations held in the highest estimation. Nothing was awanting to the general desolation: virtue, merit of every sort were persecuted with unrelenting severity: debauchery encouraged, arbitrary arrests universally established, the Revolutionary armies ploughing through the state like a devouring flame, hatred everywhere fomented, hatred and disunion brought into the bosom of domestic families. Never had a country descended so low: never had a people been overwhelmed by a similar chaos of crimes and abominations."[2] Instigated by such sufferings, a formidable band soon surrounded the Assembly. Speedily they forced their way

[2] Hist. de la Conv. ii. 215, 216.

in; drunken women, abandoned prostitutes formed the revolting advanced guard: but speedily a more formidable band of petitioners, with pikes in their hands, filled every vacant space. Having penetrated to the bar, they commenced the most seditious harangues; and ascending the benches of the members, seated themselves with the deputies of the Mountain. Every thing announced the approach of a crisis; the Jacobins were recovering their former audacity, and the majority of the Assembly labouring under severe apprehension, were on the point of withdrawing, when, fortunately, a large body of the Troupe Dorée, who had assembled at the sound of the tocsin, entered the hall, under the command of Pichegru, chanting in loud strains the "Reveil du Peuple." The insurgents knew their masters; and that formidable body, before whom the strength of the monarchy had so often trembled, yielded to the courage of a few thousand undisciplined young men. The crowd lately so clamorous, gradually withdrew from the bar, and, in a short time, the accused members were left alone to the vengeance of the Assembly, to answer for a revolt, which they had so evidently excited.[1]

Defeat of the Insurgents.

[1] Lac. xii. 198. Mig. ii. 365. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 295—305.

The Thermidorians made a humane use of their victory. They were fearful of making too large chasms in the ranks of the allies, by whose assistance they had so recently been delivered from the tyranny of Robespierre; and they justly feared a reaction in the public mind, if they put themselves in practice on their first triumph, the bloody maxims which they had so severely condemned in their adversaries. By a concert with the leaders of the Girondists, Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barrere, were condemned to the limited punishment of transportation; and seventeen members of the Mountain, who had seemed most favourable to the revolt,[2] were put under ar-

Humanity of the Thermidorians after their Victory.

[2] Mig. ii. 367. Th vii. 290—300. Lac. xii. 198, 199.

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rest, and the next day conducted to the Chateau of Ham. The persons thus put in confinement, comprised Cambon, Ruamps, Thuriot, Amar, and the whole strength of the Jacobin party.

Condemned Prisoners are Transported to Ham.

The transference of the condemned deputies to the Chateau of Ham was not accomplished without some difficulty. They were once rescued by the insurgent populace; but Pichegru having arrived at the head of three hundred of the Troupe Dorée, the mob was dispersed, and the prisoners again seized and conducted to the place of their confinement. Nothing is more instructive in the history of the French Revolution, than the important consequences which, in all its stages, attended the efforts even of the smallest body, acting energetically in the cause of order.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 200. Toul.v. 213.

And thence to Cayenne.

The fate of these revolutionary leaders was commensurate to their crimes in the colony to which they were conveyed. Their lives, which were in the first instance threatened by the burning climate of Cayenne, were saved by the generous kindness of the sisters of charity, who, in the hospital on that distant shore, continued to practise, towards the most depraved of mankind, the sublime principles of forgiveness of injuries. Collot d'Herbois shortly after his recovery, endeavoured to engage the slaves of the colony in a revolt; being defeated in the attempt, he was confined in the Fort of Siminari, where he died, of a bottle of spirits which he swallowed in a moment of despair.[2] Billaud Varennes survived long the other companions of his exile; his hardened mind prevented him from feeling the pangs of remorse, and his favourite occupation was teaching a parrot which he had tamed, the jargon and the indecencies of the revolutionary language. Barrere had nearly died shortly after his banishment, of a loathsome malady which he had

[2] Lac. xii. 201.

contracted at Rochfort; but he survived both that disease and the burning climate of Siminari, and was restored to France by Napoleon in 1800; and before the expiry of his exile, Billaud Varennes beheld the arrival, in the hut next his own, of the illustrious Pichegru, whose vigour had been so instrumental in conducting him into exile.[1]*

[1] Lac. xii. 202.

Renewed Efforts of the Jacobins.

The Jacobins were broken, but not subdued. By the fall of Robespierre, and the execution of his associates in the Municipality, they had lost the Commune; the closing of their place of debates had deprived them of their centre of operations; by the exile of so many members of the Assembly, they were bereaved of their ablest leaders. Still there remained to them the forces of the Fauxbourgs; the inhabitants of which retained their arms which they had received in an early period of the revolutionary troubles; while their needy circumstances, and exasperation at the high price of provisions, rendered them ready for the most desperate enterprises. The failure of their revolt on 1st April did not discourage their leaders; they saw in it only a proof of the necessity of making a greater effort with more formidable forces. A general insurrection of the Fauxbourgs was agreed on for the 20th May; above thirty thou-

* Barrere was employed in obscure situations by Napoleon, and was alive at Brussels, where he was living in great poverty, in 1831. It was one of his favourite positions at that time, "that the world could never be civilized, till the punishment of death was utterly abolished, and that no human being had a right to take away the life of another." This was the man who said in 1793, "The Tree of Liberty cannot flourish if it is not watered by the blood of a king; and Il n'y a que les morts qui ne revient pas." So completely does a Revolution unhinge the human mind, that no reliance can be placed in its vicissitudes, on anything but the sense of duty which religion inspires. Before the Revolution he was the Marquis de Vieussac with an ample fortune.—See Sir Arthur Brooke Faulkner's Travels in Germany, i. 260—268.

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sand men, armed with pikes, were then to march against the Convention, a greater force than that which had proved victorious on many former occasions, and never before had they been animated by so ferocious a spirit. Their rallying cry was, "Bread, and the Constitution 1793." [1]

[1] Lac. xii. 218. Th. vii. 381. 382. Mig. ii. 367.

19th May.

The succeeding night (19th May) was one of the most frightful which occurred during the whole course of the Revolution. From sunset Paris was the theatre of unceasing perturbation: seditious groups were formed on the quays, in the squares, on the boulevards: a crowd of noisy discontented persons traversed every quarter, calling on the discontented, the famishing, the desperate to revolt: bands of women went from door to door, knocking aloud, raising alarming cries in the streets, and deploring the death of the *good Robespierre*, whom the aristocrats had put to death, and calling on the people to rise against their oppressors, march straight to the Tuileries and instal the true Republicans in power. The generale and the tocsin sounded at the same time: to their incessant clang were soon joined hideous cries, fierce vociferations, mingled with the occasional discharge of musquets and pistols: while the cannon of Government sounded at intervals: and the deep bell, placed lately on the summit of the Great Pavilion of the Tuileries, by its loud and measured toll called the National Guard to the defence of the Convention.[2]

[2] Hist. de la Conv. iv. 310, 311.

Hesitation appeared on the following morning of order: the Jacobins were already in arms; immense assemblages appeared round the Pantheon, in the place of the Bastile, in that of Notre Dame, in the Place de Gréve, in the Place Royal. The whole city was in agitation: vast bodies of insurgents by day break

surrounded the Assembly, and by ten o'clock every avenue to it was choked with a forest of Pikes.[1]

The insurgents had adopted the most energetic measures to restore the democratic order of things. In the name of the "Insurgent people who had risen to obtain bread, and resume their rights," they established a provisional committee, which immediately abolished the revolutionary government, proclaimed the democratic Constitution of 1793; the dismissal of the members of administration, and their arrest; the liberation of the patriots in confinement; the immediate convocation of the primary assemblies; the suspension of all authority not emanating from the people. They resolved to create a new Municipality to serve as a centre of operations, to seize the telegraph, the barriers, the cannon of alarm, and the tocsin; and to invite all the forces, both regular and irregular, to join the banners of the people, and march against the Assembly.[2]

[1] Hist. de la Conv. iv. 311, 312.

[2] Mig. ii. 368, 389. Th. vii. 384.

Excessive Misery at Paris.

The misery at Paris at this time, in consequence of the famine which the Reign of Terror had brought upon France, and the general failure of agricultural exertion, in consequence of the forced requisitions and the law of the *Maximum*, had now risen to the very highest pitch. A contemporary republican writer gives the following energetic picture of the public suffering:—"The Convention had lost all its popularity, because it had evinced so little disposition to relieve the sufferings of the people, which had now become absolutely intolerable. The anarchists, the enemies of order, profited by this ferment, and did their utmost to augment it, because that class reap no harvest but in the fields of misery. France, exhausted by every species of suffering, had lost even the power of uttering a complaint, and we had all arrived at such

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a point of depression, that death, if unattended by pain, would have been wished for even by the youngest human being, because it offered the prospect of repose, and every one panted for that blessing at any price. But it was ordained that many days, months, and years should still continue in that state of horrible agitation, the true foretaste of the torments of Hell."[1]

[1] Duchess d'Ab. i. 296.

Great Insurrection in May.

The mobs which had, for some weeks preceding, assembled in the streets on account of the high price of provisions and universal suffering, prevented the Convention from being aware of the approach of a great popular movement, or of the magnitude of the danger which threatened them. No sooner, however, were they informed of it, on the morning of the revolt, by the Committees of Government, than they took the most prompt measures to maintain their authority. They instantly declared their sittings permanent, voted all assemblages of the people seditious, named commanders of the armed force, and summoned the National Guard of the Sections by the sound of the tocsin to their defence. But these measures promised only tardy relief, while the danger was instant and imminent. Scarcely were the decrees of the Convention passed, when a furious multitude broke into the hall, crying aloud for bread and the Constitution of 1793. The President Vernier behaved with a dignity befitting his situation. "Your cries," he said, "will not alter one iota of our measures; they will not hasten by one second the arrival of provisions, they will only retard them." A violent tumult drowned his voice; the insurgents broke open the inner doors with hatchets, and instantly a vociferous multitude filled the whole of the room. A severe struggle ensued between the National Guard, intrusted with the

May 20.

Convention Besieged. Heroic conduct of Boissy d'Anglas.

defence of the Assembly, and the furious rabble. Vernier was torn from the chair, it was immediately occupied by Boissy d'Anglas, who, through the whole of that perilous day, evinced the most heroic firmness of mind. Feraud, with generous devotion, interposed his body to receive the blows destined for the president; he was mortally wounded, dragged out by the populace, and beheaded in the lobby. They instantly placed his head on a pike, and with savage cries re-entered the hall, bearing aloft in triumph the bloody trophy of their violence. Almost all the deputies fled in consternation; none remained excepting the friends of the revolt; and Boissy d'Anglas, who, with Roman constancy, filled the chair, and regardless of all the threats of the multitude, unceasingly protested, in the name of the Convention, against the violence with which they were assailed. They presented to him the lifeless head of Feraud; he turned aside with emotion from the horrid spectacle; they again presented it, and he bowed with reverence before the remains of fidelity and devotion. He was at length torn from his chair by the efforts of his friends, and the insurgents, overawed by the grandeur of his conduct, permitted him to retire without molestation. The annals of Rome afford nothing more sublime.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 370. Lac. xii. 221, 223. Th. vii. 386, 391. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 320, 331.

They obtain the Mastery of the Legislature;

Being now undisputed masters of the Convention, the insurgents, with the aid of their associates in the Assembly, proceeded without delay to assume the government. Amidst the gloom of twilight, they named a president, got possession of all the bureaux, and in the midst of deafening applause, passed a series of resolutions declaratory of their intentions. The most important of these were, the restoration of the Jacobin club, the re-establishment of the democratic constitution, the recall of the exiled members, the dismis-

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sal of all the existing members of the government. A provisional government, and a commander of the armed force, were named, and every thing seemed to indicate a complete revolution.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 370. Lac. xii. 223. Th. vii. 392—394. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 336, 337.

But though the Assembly was dissolved, the Committees still existed, and their firmness saved France. All the efforts of the insurgents to force their place of meeting were defeated by the vigour of a few companies of National Guard, and a determined band of the *Troupe Dorée*, who guarded the avenues to that last asylum of order and humanity. As night approached many of the mob retired to their homes, and the forces of the Sections began to assemble in strength round the Committees. Encouraged by the strength of their defenders, they even returned to the seat of government, and there ventured on an open attack on the insurgents: the Sections advanced with fixed bayonets, the pikemen of the Fauxbourgs stood their ground, and a bloody strife ensued in the hall and on the benches of the Convention. The opposing cries, Vive les Jacobins, Vive la Convention, resounded from the opposite sides of the room, and success was for a few minutes doubtful. At length the Insurgents were forced back, and a frightful mass of men and women, half of whom were intoxicated, were forced out of the Hall. At eleven o'clock Legendre made a sally, and speedily routed the surrounding multitude; they made a resistance as pusillanimous as their conduct had been violent; and the members who had fled, resumed at midnight their places in the Convention. All that had been done by the rebel authority was immediately annulled; eight-and-twenty members who had supported their proceedings, were put under arrest, and at five in the morning they were already five leagues from Paris.[2]

But are at length Defeated by the Committees and the Troupe Dorée.

[2] Mig. ii. 371. Lac. xii. 223. Th. vii. 395, 398. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 339, 344.

Such was the termination of this memorable revolt,

which obtained the name of the insurrection of the 1st Prairial. On no former occasion had the people evinced such exasperation, or a spectacle so terrible been exhibited in the legislature. If cannon were not planted in battery against the Convention, as on the 31st May, yet the scenes in the interior of its hall were more bloody and appalling; and the victory of the populace for the time not less complete. The want of design and decision on the part of the insurgents alone made them lose the victory after they had gained it, and saved France from a return to the Reign of Blood.[1]

[1] Th. vii. 402. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 343, 344.

But the Fauxbourgs, though defeated, were not subdued. On the following day they advanced in still greater force against the Convention, and had already pointed their cannon against the place of their deliberation. The conduct of the President Legendre on this trying occasion was in the highest degree admirable. The sound of the approach of the cannon made several members start from their seats, and run towards the door. "Representatives!" cried he, "remain at your posts; be steady. Nature has destined us all to death; a little sooner or later is of little moment; but an instant's vacillation would ruin you for ever." Awed by these words, they resumed their seats, and awaited in silence the enemies who surrounded the hall. Their defenders, however, soon arrived; the Jeunesse Dorée appeared in strength: arms were distributed to thirty thousand men: the cavalry appeared in imposing numbers; the Sections Lepelletier, and La Buttemoulins, ranged themselves round the Convention; cannon were planted, and platoons ready to discharge on both sides. Intimidated by a resistance they had not expected, the chiefs of the insurgents paused; and the Assembly, taking advan-

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tage of their hesitation, entered into a negotiation with their leaders, who prevailed on the people to retire, after receiving the assurance that the supply of provisions for the capital should be attended to, and the laws of the Constitution 1793 enforced. The result of that day demonstrated, that the physical force of the populace, however formidable, being deprived of the guidance of leaders of ability, could not contend with the permanent influence of the government.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 372. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 349, 350.

Instructed by so many disasters, and such narrow escapes from utter ruin, the Convention resolved on the most decisive measures. Six of the most obnoxious members of the Mountain were delivered over to a military commission, by whom they were condemned. Three of them, Rome, Goujon, and Du Quesnoy, stabbed themselves at the bar on receiving sentence, and expired in presence of the judges; the other three were only mortally wounded, and were led, still bleeding, to the scaffold. They all died with a stoical firmness, so often displayed during those days of anarchy, the victims of political, worse than any religious fanaticism.[1]

Trial and Condemnation of Rome and the Jacobin Remnant.

17th June.

[1] Lac. xii. 230. Mig. ii. 373. Th. vii. 407, 408. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 351.

At length the period was arrived when the Fauxbourgs, whose revolts had so often proved fatal to the tranquillity of France, were to be finally subdued. The murderer of the deputy Feraud had been discovered, and condemned by a military commission. When the day of his punishment approached, the Convention, to prevent another revolt, ordered the disarming of the Fauxbourgs. A band of the most intrepid of the Troupe Dorée, imprudently advanced into that thickly peopled quarter; and after seizing some arms, found themselves surrounded by its immense population. They owed their safety to the humanity or prudence of the leaders of the revolt, who hesitated to imbrue

Condemnation of Feraud's Murderer.

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their hands in the blood of the best families of Paris. But no sooner were they permitted to retire, than the National Guard, thirty thousand strong, supported by four thousand troops of the line, surrounded the revolutionary quarter; the avenues leading to it were planted with cannon, and mortars disposed on conspicuous situations to terrify them into submission. Alarmed at the prospect of a bombardment, by which their property would have been endangered, the master manufacturers, and chiefs of the revolt, had a conference, at which it was resolved to make an unconditional surrender. They submitted without limitation to the terms of the Assembly; their cannon were taken from them, the cannoneers disbanded; the Revolutionary Committees suppressed; the Constitution of 1793 abolished; and the formidable pikes, which since the 14th July, 1789, had so often struck terror into Paris, finally given up. Shortly after the military force was taken from the populace. The National Guards were organized on a new footing; the workman, the valets, the indigent citizens, were excluded from its ranks; and its new members, regularly organized by battalions and brigades, were subjected to the orders of the Military Committee. At the same time, in accordance to an earnest petition from the few remaining Catholics, they were permitted to make use of the churches, on condition of maintaining them at their own expense.[1]

Disarming of the Faux-bourg St Antoine;

[1] Mig. ii. 373. Th. vii. 410. 420. Lac. xii. 227. Toul. v. 260, 261. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 351, 352.

Thus terminated the Reign of the Multitude, six years after it had been first established, by the storming of the Bastile. From the period of their being disarmed, the populace took no farther share in the changes of government; they were brought about solely by the middling classes and the army. The Revolution, considered as a movement of the people,

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And termination of the Rule of the Multitude.

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was thereafter at an end; the subsequent struggles were merely the contests of other powers for the throne which they had made vacant.

The gradual relaxation of the extraordinary rigour of government erected by the Convention, presents an interesting epoch in the history of the Revolution.

Measures of the Convention after the Fall of Robespierre.

After the overthrow of Robespierre, the Convention endeavoured to retrace their steps towards the natural order of society; but they experienced the utmost difficulty in the attempt. To go on with the *maximum*, forced requisitions, and general distribution of food, was impossible; but how to relax these extreme measures was the question, when the general industry of the country was so grievously reduced, and the usual supplies so much straitened, both by the abstraction of agricultural labourers, the terror of the requisitions, and the forced sales at a nominal and ruinous price. The first step towards a return to the natural state was an augmentation of the price fixed as a *maximum* by two-thirds, and a limitation of the right of making forced requisitions. But these oppressive exactions were in fact abandoned by the reaction in the public feeling, and the cessation of terror, after the fall of the Dictatorial government. The assignats going on continually declining, the aversion of all the industrial classes to the *maximum* was constantly increasing, because the losses they sustained, through the forced sales, were thereby daily augmented; and the persons intrusted with the administration of the laws, being of a more moderate and humane cast, were averse to have recourse to the sanguinary measures which were still placed at their disposal. Thus there was everywhere in France a ge-

neral endeavour to elude the *maximum*, and the newly constituted authorities winked at frauds which they felt to be the necessary consequence of so unjust a law. No one, during the Reign of Terror, ventured openly to resist regulations, which rendered the industrial and commercial classes tributary to the soldiers and the multitude; but when the danger of the guillotine was at an end, the reaction against it was irresistible.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 402. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 257, 258. Th. vii. 66, 139, 224, 225.

Many months had not elapsed after the 9th Thermidor, before the total abolition of the *maximum* and forced requisitions was demanded in the Assembly. Public feeling revolted against their continuance, and they were abolished almost by acclamation. The powers of the Commission of Subsistence and Provisions were greatly circumscribed; the right of making forced requisitions continued only for a month, and its army of ten thousand employés restricted to a few hundred. At the same time, the free circulation of gold and silver, which had been arrested by the Revolutionary Government, was again permitted.[2]

Reaction against the violent measures of the Reign of Terror.

[2] Th. vii. 236, 238.

The inextricable question of the assignats next occupied the attention of the Assembly; for the suffering produced by their depreciation had become absolutely intolerable to a large portion of the people. Being still a legal tender at par, all those who had money to receive lost eleven-twelfths of their property. The salaries of the public functionaries, and the payments to the public creditors, were to a certain degree augmented, but by no means in proportion to the depreciation of the paper. But this was a trifling remedy; the great evil still remained unmitigated in all payments between man and man over the whole country.[3]

[3] Ibid. vii. 240.

The only way of withdrawing the assignats from circulation, and in consequence enhancing their value,

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was by the sale of the national domains, when, according to the theory of their formation, they should be retired by Government and destroyed. But how were purchasers to be found? That was the eternal question which constantly recurred, and never could be answered. The same national convulsion which had confiscated two-thirds of the land of France belonging to the emigrants, the clergy, and the crown domains, had destroyed almost all the capital which could be employed in its purchase. Sales to any considerable extent were thus totally out of the question, the more especially as the estates thus brought all at once to sale, consisted in great part of sumptuous palaces, woods, parks, and other domains, in circumstances, of all others, the worst adapted for a division among the industrial classes. It was not a few capitals of shopkeepers and farmers which had escaped the general wreck, that could produce any impression on such immense possessions. The difficulty, in truth, was inextricable; no sales to any extent went on; the assignats were continually increasing with the vast expenditure of Government, and at length it was got over, as will appear in the sequel, by forced means, and the proclamation of a national bankruptcy of the very worst kind.[1]

Inextricable difficulty in contracting the Assignats.

[1] Th. vii. 241, 242. Mig. ii. 403.

But the attention of the Convention was soon drawn to evils of a still more pressing kind. The abolition of the *maximum* and of the forced requisitions, had deprived government of its violent means of feeding the citizens, while, in consequence of the shock which these tyrannical proceedings had given to industry, the usual sources of supply were almost dried up. The consequence was a most severe scarcity of every kind of provisions, which went on increasing during the whole of the winter of 1794-5, and, at length, in

Dreadful scarcity in Paris from the abolition of the forced Requisitions.

March 1795, reached the most alarming height. To the natural evils of famine were superadded the horrors of a winter of uncommon severity, such as had not been experienced in Europe for a hundred years. The roads, covered with ice, were impassable for carriages; the canals were frozen up; and the means of subsistence to the metropolis seemed to be totally exhausted. In this extremity every family endeavoured to lay in stores for a few days, and the few convoys which approached Paris were besieged by crowds of famishing citizens, who proceeded twenty and thirty miles to anticipate the ordinary supplies. Nothing remained but for government, who still adhered, though with weakened powers, to the system of distributing food to the people, to diminish the rations daily issued out; and on the report of Boissy d'Anglas, the quantity served out from the public magazines was diminished to one-half, or a pound of bread a-day for each person above the working classes, and a pound and a-half to those actually engaged in labour. At this rate, there was distributed to the 636,000 inhabitants of the capital, eighteen hundred and ninety seven sacks of flour. But small as this quantity was, it was soon found necessary to reduce it still farther; and at length, for several weeks, each citizen received only *two ounces* of black and coarse bread a-day. Small as this pittance was, it could be obtained only by obtaining tickets from the committees of Government, and after waiting at the doors of the bakers from eleven at night till seven in the morning, during the rigour of an arctic winter. The citizens of Paris were for months reduced to the horrors of a besieged town; numbers perished of famine, and many owed their existence to the kindness of some friend in the country, and the introduction of the potato,[1] which already be-

Miserable fare and sufferings of the People.

[1] Th. vii. 246, 252. Lac. xii. 191, 192.

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gan to assuage this artificial, as it has so often since done the most severe natural scarcities.

The abolition of the *maximum*, of the requisitions, and of all the forced methods of procuring supplies, produced, as might have been anticipated, a most violent reaction on the price of every article of consumption, and, by consequence, on the value of the assignats. Foreign commerce having begun to revive with the cessation of the Reign of Terror, sales being no longer forced, the assignat was brought into comparison with the currency of other countries, and its enormous inferiority precipitated still further its fall. The rapidity of its decline gave rise to numerous speculations on the exchange of Paris; and the people, in the midst of the horrors of famine, were exasperated by the sight of fortunes made out of the misery which they endured. Government, to provide for the necessities of the inhabitants, had no other resource but to increase the issue of assignats for the purchase of provisions; three milliards more were issued for this necessary purpose, and the consequence was, that the paper money fell almost to nothing. Bread was exposed for sale at twenty-two francs the pound, and what formerly cost 100 francs, was now raised to 4000. In the course of the year the depreciation became such, that 28,000 francs in paper were exchanged for a louis d'or, and a dinner for five or six persons cost 60,000 francs. A kind of despair seized every mind at such prodigious and apparently interminable losses, and it was the force of this feeling which produced the great revolts already mentioned, which had so nearly proved fatal to the Thermidorians, and restored the whole forced system of the Reign of Terror.[1]

Enormous depreciation in the value of the Assignats.

Public despair in consequence.

[1] Th. vii. 376, 381. Lac. xiii. 40.

The overthrow of this insurrection led to several

laws which powerfully tended to diminish the destructive ascendency of the people in the government. The National Guards were reorganized on the footing on which they had been before the 10th August; the labouring and poorer classes excluded, and the service confined to the more substantial citizens. At Paris this important force was placed under the orders of the military committee. The Government got quit at the same time of a burdensome and ruinous custom, which the Convention had borrowed from the Athenian Democracy, of allowing every indigent citizen fifty sous a-day, while they were engaged at their respective Sections; a direct premium on idleness, and a constant inducement to the turbulent and restless to assemble at these great centres of democratic power. The churches were restored to the anxious wishes of the Catholics, on the condition that they should maintain them themselves; the first symptom of a return to religious feeling in that infidel age.[1]

June and July 1795.

[1] Th. vii. 419. 420. Lac. xiii. 43.

All the evils, the necessary result of an excessive and forced paper circulation, went on increasing after the Government had returned to moderate measures, were installed in power. Subsistence was constantly wanting in the great towns; the treasury was empty of all but assignats; the great bulk of the national domains remained unsold; the transactions, debts, and properties of individuals were involved in inextricable confusion. Sensible of the necessity of doing something for those who were paid in the government paper, the Directory adopted a scale by which the assignats were taken as worth a fifth of their nominal value; but this was an inconsiderable relief, as they had fallen to a *hundred-and-fiftieth* part of the sum for which they had been ori-

Vain Measures of the Government to arrest the evil.

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ginally issued. The consequence of this excessive depreciation in a paper which was still a legal tender, was, that the whole debts of individuals were extinguished by a payment worth nothing; that the income of the fundholders was annihilated; and the State itself, compelled to receive its own paper in payment of the taxes, found the treasury filled with a mass of sterile assignats. But for the half of the land-tax, which was received in kind, the government would have been literally without the means either of feeding Paris or the armies.[1]

[1] Th. viii. 85, 86. Lac. xiii 32.

Hitherto the reaction had been in favour of constitutional and moderate measures; but the last great victory over the Jacobins revived the hopes of the Royalists. The emigrants and the clergy had returned in great numbers since the repeal of the severe laws passed against them during the Reign of Terror, and contributed powerfully to incline the public mind to a moderate and constitutional monarchy. The horror excited by the sanguinary proceedings of the Jacobins was so strong and universal, that the reaction naturally was in favour of a Royalist Government. The recent successes of the Troupe Dorée, who formed the flower of the youth of Paris, had awakened in them a strong esprit de corps, and prepared the great and inert body of the people to follow a banner which had so uniformly led to victory.[2]

Further progress of Humane Measures.

[2] Mig. ii. 381. Th. viii. 1. 9.

So strong was the feeling at that period from recent and grievous experience of the dangers of popular tumults, that after the disarming of the Fauxbourgs, several sections made a voluntary surrender of their artillery to the government. A large body of troops of the line were brought to Paris, and encamped in

the Plain of Sablons; and the galleries of the Assembly were closed except to persons having tickets of admission. The language of the deputations of the Sections at the bar of the Convention became openly hostile to the dominion of the people, and such as would a few months earlier have been a sure passport to the scaffold. "Experience," said the deputies of the Section Lepelletier, "has taught us that the despotism of the people is as insupportable as the tyranny of kings." The Revolutionory Tribunal, at the same period, was abolished by a decree of the Convention. A journal of the day observed, "Such was the tranquil and bloodless end of the most atrocious institution, of which, since the Council of Blood established by the Duke of Alva in the Low Countries, the history of tribunals, instruments of injustice, has preserved the remembrance."[1]

And abolition of the Revolutionary Tribunal. June 17.

1 Toul. v. 263, 270. Th. viii. 20, 21.

During this revolution of public opinion, the Convention were engaged in the formation of a Constitution. It is in the highest degree both curious and instructive to contemplate the altered doctrines which prevailed after the consequences of popular government had been experienced, and how generally men reverted to those principles which, in the commencement of the Revolution, were stigmatized as slavish and disgraceful. Boissy d'Anglas was chosen to make a report upon the form of the Constitution; his memoir contains much important truth, which preceding events had forced upon the observation of mankind. "Hitherto," said he, "the efforts of France have been solely directed to destroy; at present, when we are neither silenced by the oppression of tyrants, nor intimidated by the cries of demagogues, we must turn to our advantage the crimes of the Monarchy, the errors of the Assembly, the horrors of the Decemviral

Formation of a new Constitution.

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tyranny, the calamities of anarchy. Absolute equality is a chimera; virtue, talents, physical or intellectual powers, are not equally distributed by Nature. Property alone attaches the citizen to his country; all who are to have any share in the legislature should be possessed of some independent income. All Frenchmen are citizens; but the state of domestic service, pauperism, or the non-payment of taxes, forbid the great majority from exercising their rights. The Executive Government requires a central position, a disposable force, a display calculated to strike the vulgar. The people should never be permitted to deliberate indiscriminately on public affairs; a populace constantly deliberating rapidly perishes by misery and disorder; the laws should never be submitted to the consideration of the multitude." Such were the principles ultimately adopted by the Revolutionary Assembly of France. In a few years, centuries of experience had been acquired.[1]

[1] Toul. v. 272, 273.

General abandonment of Democratic principles from the force of experience.

If such was the language of the Convention, it may easily be conceived how much more powerful was the reaction among the middling classes of the people. The National Guard, and the *Jeunesse Dorée* of several Sections, were become openly Royalists; they wore the green and black uniform which distinguished the Chouans of the western provinces; the Réveil du Peuple was beginning to awaken the dormant, not extinguished, loyalty of the French character. The name of *Terrorist* had become the signal for proscriptions as perilous in many places as that of *Aristocrat* had formerly been.

In the south, especially, the reaction was terrible. Bands, bearing the names of the "Companies of Jesus," and the "Companies of the Sun," traversed the country, executing the most dreadful reprisals upon

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the revolutionary party. At Lyons, Aix, Tarascon, and Marseilles, they massacred the prisoners without either trial or discrimination; the 2d of September was renewed with all its horrors in most of the prisons of the south of France. At Lyons, after the first massacre of the Terrorists, they pursued the wretches through the streets, and when any one was seized, he was instantly thrown into the Rhone; at Tarascon, the captives were cast headlong from the top of a lofty rock into that rapid stream. One prison at Lyons was set on fire by the infuriated mob, and the unhappy inmates all perished in the flames. The people, exasperated with the blood which had been shed by the revolutionary party, were insatiable in their vengeance; they invoked the name of a parent, brother, or sister, when retaliating on their oppressors; and while committing murder themselves, exclaimed, with every stroke, "Die, assassins!" History must equally condemn such horrors by whomsoever committed; but it must reserve its severest censure for those by whom they were *first* perpetrated.[1]

Violent reaction in the South of France.

[1] Lac. xii. 210. Mig. ii. 382. Freron, 9—82. 73.

Many innocent persons perished, as in all popular tumults, during those bloody days. The two sons of the Duke of Orleans, the Duke de Montpensier, and the Count Beaujolais, were confined in the fort of St John at Marseilles, where they had been forgot during the Reign of Terror. On the 6th June, a terrible noise round the fort announced the approach of the frantic multitude. The cries of the victims in the adjoining cells too soon informed them of the danger which they ran; Royalists and Jacobins were indiscriminately massacred by the bloody assassins. Isnard and Cadroi at length put a stop to the massacres, but not before eighty persons had been murdered. The former, though he strove to moderate the savage mea-

Generous conduct of the young Duke of Orleans' sons.

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sures of the Royalists, increased their fury by the fearful energy of his language. "We want arms," said the young men who were marching against the Jacobins of Toulon. "Take," said he, "the bones of your fathers to march against their murderers."[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 212.

The fate of these young Princes was in the highest degree interesting. Some months afterwards, they formed a plan of escape; but the Duke de Montpensier, in descending the wall of the fort, broke his leg, was seized, and reconducted to prison. He consoled himself for his failure, by the thoughts that his brother had succeeded, when he beheld him re-enter the cell, and fall upon his neck. Escaped from danger, and on the point of embarking on board a vessel destined for America, he had heard of the misfortune of his brother, and, unable to endure freedom without him, he had returned to prison to share his fate. They were both subsequently liberated, and reached America; but they soon died, the victims of a long and severe captivity of four years.[2]

[2] Lac. xii. 216.

During the predominance of these principles, upwards of eighty Jacobins were denounced in the Convention, and escaped execution only by secreting themselves in different parts of France. The only secure asylum which they found was in the houses of the Royalists, whom, during the days of their power, they had saved from the scaffold. Not one was betrayed by those to whom they fled. So predominant was the influence of the Girondists, that Louvet obtained a decree, ordering an expiatory fête for the victims of 31st May. None of the Thermidorians ventured to resist the proposal, though many amongst them had contributed in no inconsiderable degree to their fate.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 231.

About the same time, the infant King of France,

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Louis XVII., expired. The 9th Thermidor came too late to save the life of this unfortunate Prince. His cruel jailer, Simon, was indeed beheaded, and a less cruel tyrant substituted in his place; but the temper of the times would not at first admit of any decided measures of indulgence in favour of the heir to the throne. The barbarous treatment he had experienced from Simon, had alienated his reason, but not extinguished his feelings of gratitude. On one occasion, that inhuman wretch had seized him by the hair, and threatened to dash his head against the wall; the surgeon, Naulin, interfered to prevent him, and the unhappy child next day presented him with two pears, which had been given him for his supper the preceding evening, lamenting, at the same time, that he had no other means of testifying his gratitude. Simon and Hebert had put him to the torture, to extract from him an avowal of crimes connected with his mother, which he was too young to understand; after that cruel day, he almost always preserved silence, lest his words should prove fatal to some of his relations. This resolution, and the closeness of his confinement, soon preyed upon his health. In February 1795, he was seized with a fever, and visited by three Members of the Committee of General Safety; they found him sitting at a little table, making castles of cards. They addressed to him the words of kindness, but could not obtain any answer. In May, the state of his health became so alarming, that the celebrated surgeon Dessault was directed by the Convention to visit him; his generous attentions assuaged the sufferings of his later days, but could not prolong his life.[1]

June 8, 1795.

Death and last days of Louis XVII. in Prison.

[1] Lac. xii. 369, 374.

Liberation of the Duchess d'Angouleme.

The public sympathy was so strongly excited by this event, that it induced the Assembly to consent to

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the freedom of the remaining child of Louis XVI. On the 18th of June, the Duchess d'Angouleme was liberated from the Temple, and exchanged for the four Commissioners of the Convention, whom Dumourier had delivered up to the Austrians.[1]

[1] Lac, xii. 383.

Continued Captivity of La Fayette.

The fate of La Fayette, Latour Maubourg, and other eminent men who were detained in the Austrian prisons, since their defection from the armies of France, at this time excited the most ardent sympathy both in France and England. They had been rigorously guarded since their captivity in the fortress of Olmutz: and the humane in every part of the world beheld with regret men who had voluntarily delivered themselves up to avoid the excesses of a sanguinary faction, treated with more severity than prisoners of war. Mr Fox in vain endeavoured to induce the British government to interfere in their behalf; the reply of Mr Pitt in the House of Commons equalled the speech of his eloquent rival. His wife and daughters, finding all attempts at his deliverance ineffectual, generously resolved to share his captivity; and they remained in confinement with him at Olmutz till the victories of Napoleon in 1796 compelled the Austrian government to consent to their liberation. His confinement, however tedious, was probably the means of saving his life; it is hardly possible that in France he could have survived the Reign of Terror, or escaped the multitude to which he had long been the object of execration.[2]

General interest in his behalf.

[2] Lac. x. 386, 387.

Completion of the new Constitution.

Meanwhile, the Convention proceeded rapidly with the formation of the new Constitution. This was the *third* which had been imposed upon the French people during the space of a few years; a sufficient proof of the danger of incautiously overturning long-established institutions. The Constitution of 1795 was

very different from those which had preceded it, and gave striking proof of the altered condition of the public mind on the state of political affairs. Experience had now taught all classes that the chimera of perfect equality could not be attained; that the mass of the people are unfit for the exercise of political rights; that the contests of factions terminate, if the people are victorious, in the supremacy of the most depraved. The Constitution which was framed under the influence of these sentiments, differed widely from the democratic institutions of 1793. The ruinous error was now acknowledged of uniting the whole legislative powers in one Assembly, and enacting the most important laws, without the intervention of any time to deliberate on their tendency, or recover from the excitement under which they may have originated. The legislative power, therefore, was divided into two Councils, that of the *Five Hundred*, and that of the *Ancients*. The Council of Five Hundred was intrusted with the sole power of originating laws; that of the Ancients with the power of passing or rejecting them; and to ensure the prudent discharge of this duty, no person could be a member of it till he had reached the age of forty years. No bill could pass till after it had been three times read, with an interval between each reading of at least five days.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 385. Toul. v.404. Th. viii. 13.

The executive power, instead of being vested as heretofore in two committees, was lodged in the hands of five Directors, nominated by the Council of Five Hundred, approved by that of the Ancients. They were liable to be impeached for their misconduct by the Councils. Each individual was by rotation to be President during three months; and every year a fifth new Director was to be chosen in lieu of one who was bound to retire. The Directory thus constituted, had

The Constitution of the Directory.

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the entire disposal of the army and finances, the appointment of all public functionaries, and the management of all public negociations. They were lodged during the period of their official duty in the Palace of the Luxembourg, and attended by a guard of honour.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 386, 387. Toul. v. 399. Th. viii. 13, 14.

The privilege of electing members for the legislature was taken away from the great body of the people, and confined to the colleges of delegates. Their meetings were called the *Primary Assemblies*; and in order to ensure the influence of the middling ranks, the persons elected by the Primary Assemblies were themselves the electors of the members of the legislature. All popular societies were interdicted, and the press declared absolutely free.[2]

Elective Franchise confined to Proprietors.

[2] Mig. ii. 385. Th. viii. 14, 15.

It is of importance to recollect that this Constitution, so cautiously framed to exclude the direct influence of the people, and curb the excesses of popular licentiousness, was the voluntary work of the very Convention which had come into power under the democratic Constitution of 1793, and immediately *after* the 10th August; which had voted the death of the King, the imprisonment of the Girondists, and the execution of Danton; which had supported the bloody excesses of the Decemvirs, and survived the horrors of the Reign of Robespierre. Let it no longer be said, therefore, that the evils of popular rule are imaginary dangers, contradicted by the experience of mankind; the checks thus imposed upon the power of the people were the work of their own delegates, chosen by universal suffrage during a period of unexampled public excitation, whose proceedings had been marked by a more violent love of freedom than any that ever existed from the beginning of the world. Nothing can speak so strongly in favour of the necessity of controlling the people, as the work of the re-

presentatives whom they had themselves chosen to confirm their power.

The formation of this Constitution, and its discussion in the assemblies of the people, to which it was submitted for consideration, excited the most violent agitation throughout France. Paris, as usual, took the lead. Its forty-eight sections were incessantly assembled, and the public effervescence resembled that of 1789. This was brought to its height by a decree of the Assembly, declaring that *two-thirds* of the present Convention should form a part of the new legislature, and that the electors should only fill up the remaining part.[1] The citizens beheld with horror so large a proportion of a body, whose proceedings had deluged France with blood, still destined to reign over them. To accept the Constitution, and reject this decree, seemed the only way of getting free from their domination. The Thermidorian party had been entirely excluded from the Committee of *Eleven*, to whom the formation of the new Constitution was intrusted, and in revenge they joined the assemblies of those who sought to counteract their ambition. The focus of the effervescence was the section Lepelletier, formerly known by the name of that of the *Filles de St Thomas*, the richest and most powerful in Paris, which, through all the changes of the Revolution, had steadily adhered to Royalist principles.[1]

Great agitation in Paris, and throughout France at these changes.

[1] Toul. v. 327, 328. 330. Th. viii. 16—19. Mig. ii. 388 389. Lac. xii. 402, 403.

The Royalist Committees of Paris, of which Le Maitre was the known agent, finding matters brought to this crisis, coalesced with the journals and the leaders of the sections. They openly accused the Convention of attempting to perpetuate their power, and of aiming at usurping the sovereignty of the people. The orators of the sections said at the bar of the Assembly, "Deserve our choice, do not seek to command

Coalition of Royalists with Sections of National Guard.

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it; you have exercised an authority without bounds; you have united in yourselves all the powers, those of making laws, of revising them, of changing them, of executing them. Recollect how fatal military despotism was to the Roman Republic." The press of Paris teemed with pamphlets, inveighing against the ambitious views of the legislature; and the efforts of the sections were incessant to defeat their projects. The agitation of 1789 was renewed, but it was all now on the other side; the object now was, not to restrain the tyranny of the Court, but repress the ambition of the delegates of the people.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 404. Toul. v. 331. 333. Th. viii. 20, 22, 23. Mig. ii. 389.

Vehement Royalist Declamations at the Sections.

"Will the Convention," said the Royalist orators, "never be satisfied? Is a reign of three years, fraught with more crimes than the whole annals of twenty other nations, not sufficient for those who rose into power under the auspices of the 10th August, and the 2d September? Is that power fit to repose under the shadow of the laws, which has only lived in tempests? Let us not be deceived by the 9th Thermidor; the Bay of Quiberon, where Tallien bore so conspicuous a part, may show us that the thirst for blood is not extinguished even among those who overthrew Robespierre. The Convention has done nothing but destroy; shall we now intrust it with the work of conservation? What reliance can be placed on the monstrous coalition between the proscribers and the proscribed? Irreconcilable enemies to each other, they have only entered into this semblance of alliance in order to resist those who hate them—that is every man in France. It is we ourselves who have forced upon them those acts of tardy humanity on which they now rely as a veil to their monstrous proceedings. But for our warm representations, the members *hors la loi* would still have been wandering in exile, the

seventy-three deputies still languishing in prison. Who but ourselves, formed the faithful guard who saved them from the terrible Fauxbourgs, to whom they had basely yielded their best members on the 31st May? They now call upon us to select among its ranks those who should continue members, and form the two-thirds of the new Assembly. Can two-thirds of the Convention be found who are not stained with blood? Can we ever forget that many of its basest acts passed *unanimously*, and that a majority of three hundred and sixty-one passed a vote which will be an eternal subject of mourning to France. Shall we admit a majority of regicides into the new assembly, intrust our liberty to cowards, our fortunes to the authors of so many acts of rapine, our lives to murderers? The Convention is only strong because it mixes up its crimes with the glories of our armies; let us separate them; let us leave the Convention its sins, and our soldiers their triumphs, and the world will speedily do justice to both.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 406, 409.

Such discourses, incessantly repeated from the tribunes of forty-eight sections, violently shook the public mind in the capital. To give greater publicity to their sentiments, the orators repeated the same sentiments in addresses at the bar of the Assembly, which were immediately circulated with rapidity through the departments. The effervescence in the South was at its height; many important cities and departments seemed already disposed to imitate the sections of the metropolis. The cities of Dreus and Chartres warmly seconded their wishes; the sections of Orleans sent the following message:—"Primary Assemblies of Paris, Orleans is at your side, it advances on the same line; let your cry be resistance to oppression, hatred to usurpers, and we will second you."[2]

Extreme agitation at Paris.

[2] Lac. xii. 44.

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The National Guard of Paris shared in the general excitation. The troops of the *Jeunesse Dorée* had inspired its members with part of their own exultation of feeling, and diminished much of their wonted timidity. Resistance to the tyrant was openly spoken of; the Convention compared to the Long Parliament which shed the blood of Charles I.; and the assistance of a Monk ardently looked for to consummate the work of restoration.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 414. Th. viii. 22, 23.

Convention throw themselves on the Army.

Surrounded by so many dangers, the Convention did not abate of its former energy. They had lost the Jacobins by their proscriptions, the Royalists by their ambition. What remained? THE ARMY; and this terrible engine they resolved to employ, as the only means of establishing their power. They lost no time in submitting the Constitution to the soldiers, and by them it was unanimously adopted. Military men, accustomed to obey, and to take the lead from others, usually, except in periods of uncommon excitement, adopt any Constitution which is recommended to them by their officers. A body of five thousand regular troops were assembled in the neighbourhood of Paris, and their adhesion eagerly announced to the citizens. The Convention called to their support the Prætorian Guards; they little thought how soon they were to receive from them a master.[2]

[2] Lac xii. 414, 415. Th. viii. 35, 36. Mig. ii. 390

Sections openly resolve to Revolt.

It soon appeared that not only the armies, but a large majority of the departments had accepted the Constitution. The inhabitants of Paris, however, accustomed to take the lead in all public measures, were not discouraged; the Section Lepelletier unanimously passed a resolution, "That the powers of every constituted authority ceased in presence of the assembled people; and a provisional government, under the name of a Central Committee, was established

under the auspices of its leaders. A majority of the Sections adopted their resolution, which was immediately annulled by the Convention, and their decree was, in its turn, reversed by the Assemblies of the Electors. The contest now became open between the Sections and the Legislature; the former separated the Constitution from the decrees, ordaining the re-election of two-thirds of the old Assembly; they accepted the former, and rejected the latter.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 390, 391. Lac. xii. 415. Th. viii. 26, 29, 30. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 368, 369.

On the 3d October, (11th Vendemaire,) it was resolved by the Sections, that the electors chosen by the people should be assembled at the Théâtre Français, under protection of the National Guard; and on the 3d they were conducted there by an armed force of chasseurs and grenadiers. The dangers of an insurrection against a government, having at its command the military force of France, was apparent; but the enthusiasm of the moment overbalanced all other considerations. On the one side it was urged, "Are we about to consecrate, by our example, that odious principle of insurrections which so many bloody days have rendered odious? Our enemies alone are skilled in revolt; the art of exciting them is unknown to us. The multitude is indifferent to our cause; deprived of their aid, how can we face the government? If they join our ranks, how shall we restrain their sanguinary excesses? Should we prove victorious, what dynasty shall we establish? what chiefs can we present to the armies? Is there not too much reason to fear that success would only revive divisions, now happily forgotten, and give our enemies the means of profiting by our discord?" But to this it was replied,—"Honour forbids us to recede; duty calls upon us to restore freedom to our country, his throne to our monarch. We may now, by seizing the decisive moment,

Meeting of the Electors at the Théâtre Français.

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accomplish that which former patriots sought in vain to achieve. The 9th Thermidor only destroyed a tyrant; now tyranny itself is to be overthrown. If our names are now obscure, they will no longer remain so; we shall acquire a glory, of which even the brave Vendéans shall be envious. Let us Dare: that is the watchword in Revolutions; may it for once be employed on the side of order and freedom. The Convention will never forgive our outrages; the revolutionary tyranny, curbed for more than a year by our exertions, will rise up with renewed vigour for our destruction, if we do not anticipate its vengeance by delivering ourselves." Moved by these considerations, the Sections unanimously resolved upon resistance.[1]

[1] Lac. xii. 391, 415—416.

They resolve to Fight.

The National Guard amounted to above thirty thousand men; but it was totally destitute of artillery; the sections having, in the belief that they were no farther required, delivered up the pieces with which they had been furnished in 1789, upon the final disarming of the insurgent Fauxbourgs. Their want was now severely felt, as the Convention had fifty pieces at their command, whose terrible efficacy had been abundantly proved on the 10th August; and the cannoneers who were to serve them, were the same who had broken the lines of Prince Cobourg. The National Guard hoped, by a rapid advance, to capture this formidable train of artillery, and then the victory was secure.[2]

[2] Lac. xii. 419.

Measures of the Convention.

The leaders of the Convention, on their side, were not idle. In the evening of the 3d October, (11th Vendemaire,) a decree was passed, ordering the immediate dissolution of the electoral bodies in Paris, and embodying into a regiment fifteen hundred of the Jacobins, many of whom were liberated from the prisons for that especial purpose. These measures brought

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matters to a crisis between the sections and the government. This decree was openly resisted, and the National Guard having assembled in force to protect the electors at the Théâtre Français, the Convention ordered the military to dispossess them. General Menou was appointed commander of the armed force, and he advanced with the troops of the line to surround the Convent des Filles de St Thomas, the centre of the insurrection, where the section Lepelletier was assembled.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 391. Lac. xii. 421. Th. viii. 35, 36.

Failure of Menou against the Insurgents.

Menou, however, had not the decision requisite for success in civil contests. Instead of attacking the insurgents, he entered into a negotiation with them, and retired in the evening without having effected any thing. His failure gave all the advantages of a victory to the sections, and the National Guard mustered in greater strength than ever, and resolved to attack the Convention at its place of assembly on the following day. Informed of this failure, and the dangerous fermentation which it had produced in Paris, the Convention, at eleven at night, dismissed General Menou, and gave the command of the armed force, with unlimited powers, to General Barras. He immediately demanded the assistance, as second in command, of a young officer of artillery, who had distinguished himself at the siege of Toulon, and the war in the Maritime Alps, Napoleon Buonaparte.[2]

Armed Force of the Convention intrusted to Barras and Napoleon.

[2] Mig. ii. 392. Lac. xii. 421, 434. Th. viii. 37—39.

His decisive Measures in Seizing the Artillery.

This young officer was immediately introduced to the Committee. His manner was timid and embarrassed; the career of public life was as yet new; but his clear and distinct opinions, the energy and force of his language, already indicated the powers of his mind. By his advice the powerful train of artillery in the plains of Sablons, consisting of fifty pieces, was immediately brought by a lieutenant, afterwards well

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know in military annals, named MURAT, to the capital, and disposed in such a position as to command all the avenues to the Convention. Early on the following morning the neighbourhood of the Tuileries resembled a great intrenched camp. The line of defence extended from the Pont Neuf, along the quays of the river to the Pont Louis XV.; the Place de Carrousel, and the Louvre, were filled with cannon, and the entrance of all the streets which open into the Rue St Honorè, were strongly guarded. In this position the commanders of the Convention awaited the attack of the insurgents. Napoleon was indefatigable in his exertions to inspire the troops with confidence: he visited every post, inspected every battery, and spoke to the men with that decision and confidence which is so often the prelude to victory.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 393. Nap. ii. 267. and iii. 70, 74. Th. viii. 40, 41, 42. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 383.

Combat round the Tuileries.

The action was soon commenced; above thirty thousand men, under Generals Danican and Duhoux, surrounded the little army of six thousand, who, with this powerful artillery, defended the seat of the Legislature. The firing began in the Rue St Honorè at half-past four; the grenadiers placed on the Church of St Roch, opened a fire of musketry on the cannoneers of the Convention, who replied by a discharge of grape-shot, which swept destruction through the serried ranks of the National Guard which occupied the Rue St Honorè. Though the insurgents fought with the most determined bravery, and the fire from the Church of St Roch was well sustained, nothing could resist the murderous grape-shot of the regular soldiers. Many of the cannoneers fell at their guns, but the fire of their pieces was not diminished. In a few minutes the Rue St Honorè was deserted, and the flying columns carried confusion into the ranks of the reserve, who were formed near the Church of the Filles de

Defeat of the Sections.

St Thomas. General Danican galloped off at the first discharge, and never appeared again during the day. Meanwhile, the Pont Neuf was carried by the insurgents, and a new column, ten thousand strong, advanced along the opposite quay to the Tuileries, to attack the Pont Royal; Napoleon allowed them to advance within twenty yards of his batteries, and then opened his fire; the insurgents stood three discharges without flinching; but not having resolution enough to rush upon the cannon, they were ultimately driven back in disorder, and by seven o'clock the victory of the Convention was complete at all points. At nine, the troops of the line carried the posts of the National Guard in the Palais Royal, and on the following morning the section Lepelletier was disarmed, and the insurgents everywhere submitted.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 394, 395. Lac. xii. 436. 441. Th. viii. 42, 50. Toul. v. 366, 368. Nap. i. 70, 78. Bour. i. 90, 96.

Such was the result of the LAST INSURRECTION of the people in the French Revolution; all the subsequent changes were effected by the government, or the armies, without their interference. The insurgents were not the rabble or the assassins who had so long stained its history with blood; they were the flower of the citizens of Paris, comprising all that the Revolution had left that was generous, or elevated, or noble in the capital. They were overthrown, not by the superior numbers or courage of their adversaries, but by the terrible effect of their artillery, by the power of military discipline, and the genius of that youthful conqueror, before whom all the armies of Europe were destined to fall. The moral strength of the nation was all on their side; but in revolutions, it is seldom that moral strength proves ultimately victorious; and the examples of Cæsar and Cromwell are not required to show that the natural termination of civil strife is military despotism.

Establishment of Military Despotism.

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The Convention made a generous use of their victory. The Girondists, who exercised an almost unlimited sway over its members, put in practice those maxims of clemency which they had so often recommended to others; the officers who had gained the victory, felt a strong repugnance to their laurels being stained with the blood of their fellow-citizens. Few executions followed this decisive victory: M. Lafont, one of the military chiefs of the revolt, obstinately resisting the means of evasion which were suggested to him by the Court, was alone condemned, and died with a firmness worthy of the cause for which he suffered. Most of the accused persons were allowed time to escape, and sentence of outlawry merely recorded against them; many returned shortly after to Paris, and resumed their place in public affairs. The clemency of Napoleon was early conspicuous; his counsels, after the victory, were all on the side of mercy, and his intercession saved General Menou from a military commission.[1]

Humanity of the Convention after their Victory.

[1] Th. viii. 66. Lac. xii. 441. Mig. ii. 395. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 387, 390.

In the formation of the Councils of Five Hundred, and of the Ancients, the Convention made no attempt to constrain the public wishes. The third of the legislature, who had been newly elected, were almost all on the side of the insurgents, and even contained several Royalists; and a proposal was in consequence made by Tallien, that the election of that third should be annulled, and another appeal made to the people. Thibaudeau, with equal firmness and eloquence, resisted the proposal, which was rejected by the Assembly. They merely took the precaution, to prevent a return to royalty, to name for the Directors five persons who had voted for the death of the King, Lareveillere, Rewbell, Letourneur, Barras, and Carnot. Having thus settled the new government, they published a

Election of the Council of Ancients and Five Hundred.

general amnesty, changed the name of the Place de la Revolution into that of Place de la Concorde, and declared their sittings terminated. The last days of an Assembly stained with so much blood, were gilded by an act of clemency of which Thibaudeau justly said the annals of kings furnished few examples.[1]

[1] Mig. ii. 396. Lac. xii. 444. Thib. ii. 12, 13. Th. viii. 65, 67.

The Convention sat for more than three years; from the 21st September, 1791, to the 26th October, 1795. During that long and terrible period, its precincts were rather the field on which faction strove for ascendency, than the theatre on which legislative wisdom exerted its influence. All the parties which divided France there endeavoured to establish their power, and all perished in the attempt. The Girondists attempted it, and perished; the Mountain attempted it, and perished; the Municipality attempted it, and perished; Robespierre attempted it, and perished; the Royalists attempted it, and perished. In revolutions, it is easy to destroy; the difficulty is to establish and secure. All the experience of years of suffering, fraught with centuries of instruction; all the wisdom of age, all the talent of youth, were unable to form one stable government. A few years, often a few months, were sufficient to overturn the most apparently stable institutions. A fabric seemingly framed for eternal duration, disappeared almost before its authors had consummated their work. The gales of popular favour, ever fickle and changeable, deserted each successive faction as they rose into power; and the ardent part of the nation, impatient of control, deemed any approach to regular government insupportable tyranny.[2] The lower classes, totally incapable of rational thought, gave their support to the different parties only as long as they continued to inveigh against

Hist. de la Conv. iv. 389.

Reflections on the History of the Convention.

[2] Mig. ii. 397.

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their superiors; when they became those superiors themselves, they passed over to their enemies.[1]

Slow growth of all durable Human Institutions.

Human institutions are not like the palace of the architect, framed according to fixed rules, capable of erection in any situation, and certain in the effect to be produced. They resemble rather the trees of the forest, slow of growth, tardy of developement, readily susceptible of destruction. An instant will destroy what it has taken centuries to produce; centuries must again elapse before in the same situation a similar production can be formed. Transplantation, difficult in the vegetable, is impossible in the moral world; the seedling must be nourished in the soil, inured to the climate, hardened by the winds. Many examples are to be found of institutions being suddenly imposed upon a people; none of those so formed having any duration. To be adapted to their character and habits, they must have grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength.

The progress of improvement is irresistible. Feudal tyranny must give way in an age of increasing opulence, and the human mind cannot be for ever enchained by the fetters of superstition. No efforts of power could have *prevented* a change in the government of France; but they might have altered its character and spared its horrors. Nature has ordained that mankind should, when they are fit for it, be free; but she has not ordained that they should reach this freedom steeped in blood. Although, therefore, the overthrow of the despotic government and modification of the power of the privileged orders of France was inevitable, yet the dreadful atrocities with which their fall was attended might have been averted by human wisdom. The life of the monarch might have been saved; the constitution might have been modi-

fied, without being subverted; the aristocracy purified, without being destroyed. CHAP. XIX.

Timely concession from the Crown is the first circumstance which perhaps might have altered the character of the French Revolution. Had Louis, in the commencement of the troubles, yielded the great and reasonable demands of the people; had he granted them equality of taxation, the power of voting subsidies, freedom from arrest, and periodical Parliaments, the agitation of the moment might have been allayed, and an immediate collision between the throne and the people prevented. At a subsequent period, indeed, increasing demands, and the want of more extended privileges, might have arisen; but these discontents, being turned into a regular and legal channel, would probably have found vent without destroying the state. When the floods are out, safety is to be found only in providing early and effectual means for letting off the superfluous waters, and, at the same time, strengthening the barriers against their farther encroachment. 1795. Reflections on the History of the Revolution, and the causes of its Disasters.

But although the gradual concession of power, and the redress of all *real* grievances before the Revolution, would have been not less politic than just, nothing can be clearer, than that the sudden and vast accession of importance conferred by M. Neckar on the Tiers Etat, by the duplication of their numbers, was to the last degree prejudicial, and was, in fact, the immediate cause of the Revolution. Such a sudden addition, like the instantaneous emancipation of slaves, cannot but prove destructive, not only to the higher classes, but the lower. The powers of freedom can only be borne by those who have gradually become habituated to them; those who acquire them suddenly, by their intemperate use speedily fall under

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a worse despotism than that from which they revolted. By the consequences of this sudden and uncalled-for innovation, the Commons of France threw off the beneficent reign of a reforming monarch, they fell under the iron grasp of the Committee of Public Safety, were constrained to tremble under the bloody sway of Robespierre, and fawn upon the military sceptre of Napoleon.

No lesson is more strongly impressed upon the mind by the progress of the French Revolution than the disastrous consequences which followed the desertion of their country by the higher orders, and the wonderful effects which might have resulted from a determined resistance on their part to the first actual outrages by the people. Nearly an hundred thousand emigrants basely fled from their country, at a time when a few hundred resolute men might have saved the monarchy from destruction. La Fayette, with a few battalions of the National Guard, vanquished the Jacobins in the Champs de Mars: had he marched against their Club, and been vigorously supported, the Reign of Terror would have been prevented. Five hundred horse would have enabled the Swiss Guard to have saved the throne on the 10th August, and subdue an insurrection, which deluged the kingdom with blood. Three thousand of the troops of the Sections overthrew Robespierre at the zenith of his power; a body of undisciplined young men chased the Jacobins from the streets, and rooted out their den of wickedness; Napoleon, with five thousand regular soldiers, vanquished the National Guard of Paris, and crushed an insurrection, headed by the whole moral strength of France. These examples may convince us what can be accomplished by a small body of resolute men in civil convulsions; their physical power is almost irresistible; their mo-

ral influence commands success. One-tenth part of the emigrants who fled from France, if properly headed and disciplined, would have been sufficient to have curbed the fury of the populace, crushed the ambition of the reckless, and prevented the Reign of Terror.[1]

[1] Burke, vi. 237.

No doubt can now exist that the interference of the Allies augmented the horrors, and added to the duration of the Revolution. All its bloodiest excesses were committed during, or after an alarming, but unsuccessful invasion, by the Allied Forces. The massacres of September 2d, were perpetrated when the public mind was excited to the highest degree, by the near approach of the Duke of Brunswick; and the worst days of the government of Robespierre, were immediately after the defection of Dumourier, and the battle of Nerwinde, threatened the rule of the Jacobins with destruction. Nothing but a sense of public danger could have united the factions who then strove with so much exasperation against each other; the peril of France alone could have induced the people to submit to the sanguinary rule which so long desolated its plains. The Jacobins maintained their ascendency by constantly representing their cause as that of national independence, by stigmatizing their enemies as the enemies of the country; and the patriots wept and suffered in silence, lest by resistance they should weaken the state, and erase France from the book of nations.

In combating a revolution one of two courses must be followed; either to advance with vigour, and crush the hydra in its cradle, or to leave the factions to contend with each other, and trust for safety to the reaction which crime and suffering necessarily produce. The suppression of the Spanish Revolution

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by the Duke d'Angoulême in 1823, is an example of the success of the first system: the bloodless restoration of the English monarchs, in 1660, a proof of the wisdom of the second. To advance with menaces, and recoil with shame; to awaken resistance, and not extinguish opposition; to threaten, and not execute, is the most ruinous course that can possibly be adopted. It is to unite faction by community of danger; to convert revolutionary energy into military power; to strengthen the hands of crime, by giving it the support of virtue. Ignorance of the new element which was acting in human affairs may extenuate the fatal errors committed by the European powers in the first years of the Revolutionary war; no excuse will hereafter remain for a repetition of the mistake.

But it is not with impunity that such sins as disgraced the Revolution can be committed by any people. The actors in the bloody tragedy almost all destroyed each other; their crimes led to their natural and condign punishment, in rendering them the first victims of the passions which they had unchained. But a signal and awful retribution was also due to the nation which had suffered these iniquities, which had permitted such torrents of innocent blood to flow, and spread the bitterness of domestic suffering to such an unparalleled extent throughout the land. These crimes were registered in the book of fate; the anguish they had brought on others was speedily felt by themselves; the tears they had caused to flow, were washed out in the torrents which fell from guilty eyes.* France was decimated for her cruelty; for twenty years the flower of her youth was marched away by a relentless power to the harvest of death;

* "There is in the misfortunes of France, enough," says Savary, "to make her sons shed tears of blood."—Savary, iv. 382.

the snows of Russia revenged the guillotine of Paris. Allured by the phantom of military glory, they fell down and worshipped the power which was consuming them; they followed it to the verge of destruction, till the mask of the spectre fell, and the ghastly features of death appeared.

This dreadful punishment also was the immediate effect of the atrocities which it chastised. In the absence of all the enjoyments of domestic life, in the destruction of every pacific employment, one only career, that of violence, remained. From necessity, as well as inclination, every man took to arms; the sufferings of the state swelled the ranks on the frontier, and France became a great military power, from the causes which it was thought would have led to its destruction. The natural consequence of this was the establishment of military despotism, and the prosecution of the insane career of conquest by a victorious chieftain. France only awakened from her dream of ambition when her youth was mowed down, her armies destroyed, her conquests rifled, and her glory lost. Both the Allied Powers, and the French people suffered in these disastrous conflicts, because both deserved to suffer; the former for their ambitious projects on the territory of the Republic, the latter for their unparalleled cruelty.

Finally, the history of those melancholy periods affords the strongest evidence of the incessant operation of the principles destined for the preservation of social happiness, even in the darkest periods of human existence. Since the fall of the Roman Empire no such calamitous era had arisen as that which immediately followed the 10th of August; none in which innocence so generally suffered, and vice so long triumphed; in which impiety was so openly professed, and profligacy

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so generally indulged; in which blood flowed in such ceaseless torrents, and anguish embittered such a multitude of hearts. Yet, even in those disastrous times, the benevolent laws of Nature were incessantly acting; this anguish expiated the sins of former times; this blood tamed the fierceness of present discord. In the stern school of adversity wisdom was learned, and error forgotten; speculation ceased to blind its votaries, and ambition to mislead by the language of virtue. Years of suffering conferred centuries of experience: the latest posterity will, it is to be hoped, in that country at least, reap the fruits of the Reign of Terror. Like all human things, the government of France may undergo changes in the lapse of time; different institutions may be required, and new dynasties called to the throne; but no bloody convulsion similar to that which once tore its bosom will again take place; the higher ranks will not a second time be massacred by the lower; another French Revolution of the same character as the last, and the age in which it occurs, must be ignorant of the First.

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